# Smithsonian

*January 1992*

**Chile peppers**

**Some people just can't live without 'em (p. 42)**

# The piano is a Steinway
# The crystal is by Baccarat
# The books are Easton Press

XXXVI

For in the Market-place, one Dush of Day,
I watch'd the Potter thumping his wet Clay:
And with its all obliterated Tongue
It murmur'd — "Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

XXXVII

Ah, fill the Cup: — what boots it to repeat
How Time is slipping underneath our Feet:
Unborn To-MORROW, and dead YESTERDAY,
Why fret about them if To-DAY be sweet!

XXXVIII

One Moment in Annihilation's Waste,
One Moment, of the Well of Life to taste —
The Stars are setting and the Caravan
Starts for the Dawn of Nothing — Oh, make haste!

XXXIX

How long, how long, in infinite Pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute?
Better be merry with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

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*January 1992*

# Smithsonian

Volume 22, Number 10

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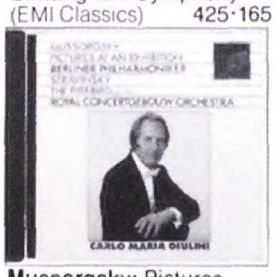


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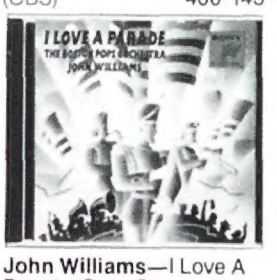


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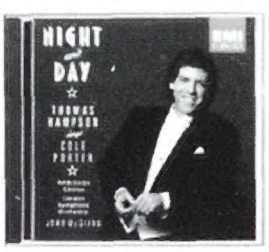


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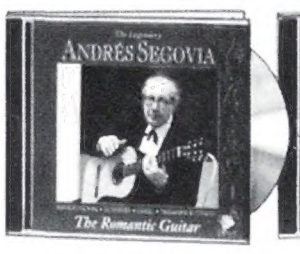


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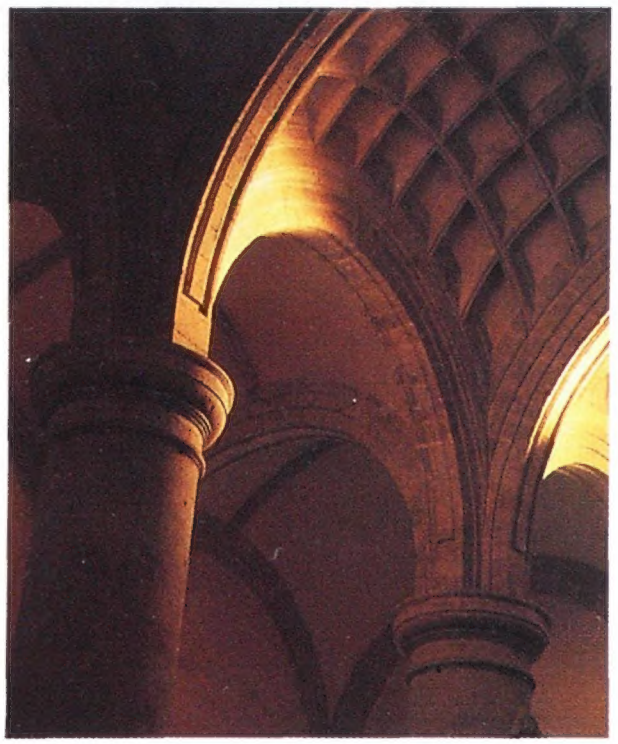

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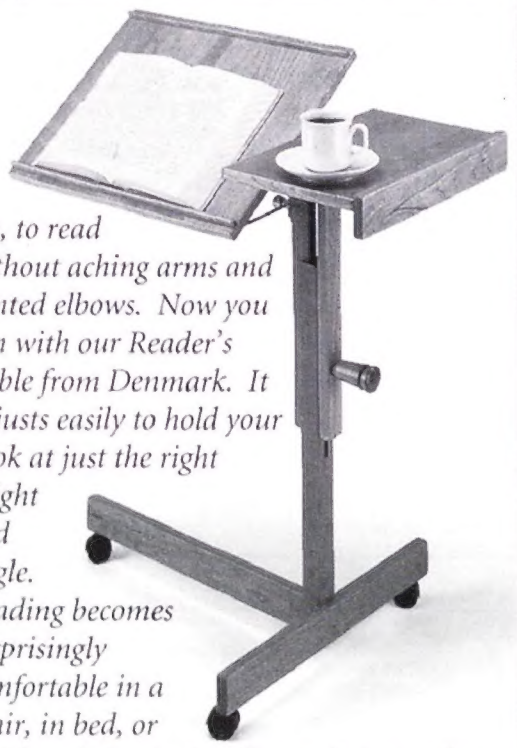

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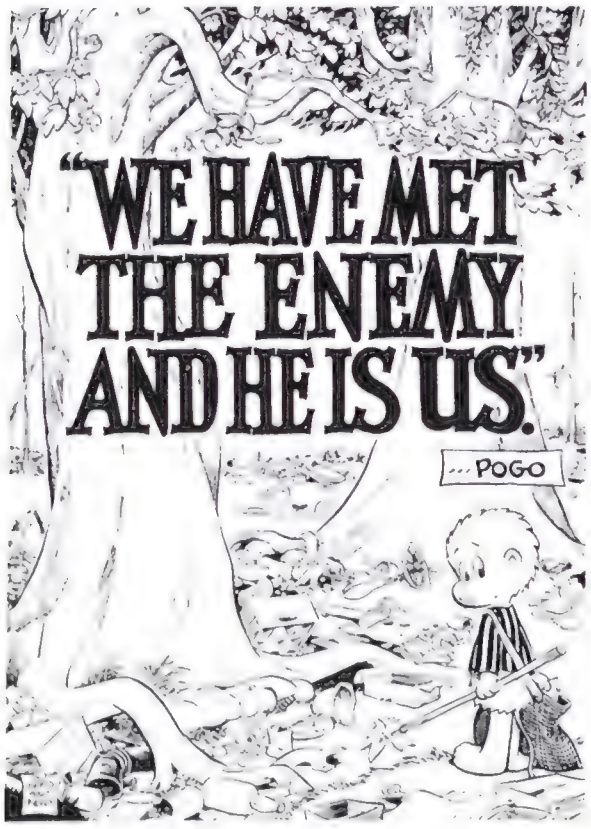


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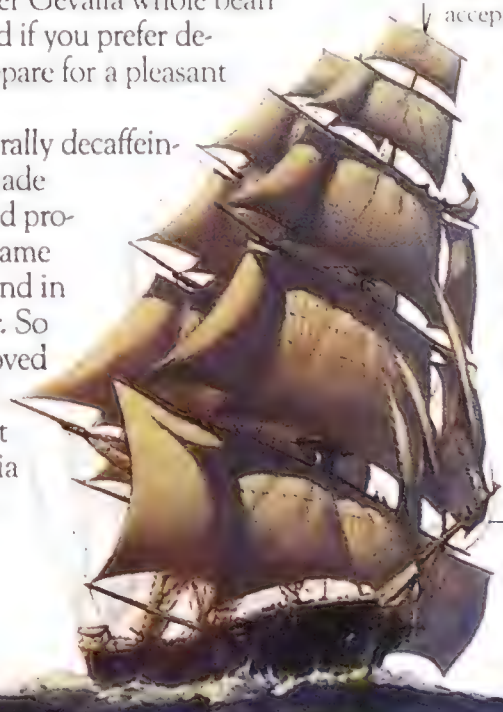

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*Secretary Adams' comments*

# *Smithsonian horizons*

*An exhibit of what Nazis regarded as "degenerate art" has lessons for us that go far beyond esthetic questions*

"Degenerate Art: The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany" is an arresting evocation of issues that still swirl around us more than half a century after the original exhibition it has sought to re-create (SMITHSONIAN, July 1991). Some three million Germans first viewed the 650 works that were placed on tour by Nazi authorities in 1937, out of a much larger number that had been confiscated from the Third Reich's museums as *entartete Kunst*—"degenerate art." Now Stephanie Barron of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art has reassembled an exhibit of 175 of them. We at the Smithsonian are proud to have afforded East Coast viewers a look at it in our S. Dillon Ripley Gallery.

The collection is extraordinary on any grounds, but with heterogeneity perhaps its most striking characteristic. On display, to begin with, are works of Paul Klee, Marc Chagall, Piet Mondrian, Wassily Kandinsky, Max Beckmann, Oskar Kokoschka, Lyonel Feininger, Otto Dix, George Grosz, Ernst Kirchner, and others assured of an honored place for as long as art is collected. Richly suggested is the fuller flowering of German Expressionism in the days of the Weimar Republic, a distressing part of which later disappeared into the bonfires of the looters. Yet alongside this core of memorable work is much that is forgettable, and not a little that almost seems to have been intended to be sickening and repulsive.

Evidently no dragnet that sought out Jews or political dissidents for blanket condemnation as artists could afford to be very selective as to schools, let alone individual qualities. Simply lumped into a residual category as deviant or degraded was everything that, for whatever reason, veered from styles consistent with naturalistic portrayal of heroic Aryanism. That the prevailing mode of production of art at the time was antiauthoritarian—as it still is today—made all but a closely circumscribed corner of art an area of choice within which to refine the instruments of political repression.

I found myself surprised and a little dismayed by the diversity and eclecticism of the exhibit, as it seemingly strained the boundaries of my own tolerances. Why should some art that was and is so clearly consequential, here memorialized in an exhibit that so well symbolizes the strength of our reaction against the political suppression of art, be compromised by its involuntary association with third-rate work? This was the result of nothing more than a Nazi-imposed principle of classification. Why should we continue to honor it?

But then, on further reflection, who are we to impose standards of our own on a different time and place? Grant that the 650 original works—including the 175 now available for viewing—are surely a hostile, nonrandom selection from the many thousands that were confiscated. At least to some extent, however, they open wide a window allowing us to glimpse the range of art-museum collecting in Germany prior to Nazi control. The past is another country, as they say. What claim have we that our own standards of selection today would be in any way superior or less arbitrary?

The brutal truth is that a lot of art, in any period, is of slight and transient importance at best. Some few exceptions may be instantly and permanently recognized, but much more common is a slow coalescence of conviction on behalf of the individuals whose ideas and achievements have permanently widened our perceptions.

Scholarly authorities no doubt cultivate a wider span of critical sensitivity than the rest of us, but the essential principles for sustaining the role of art in our lives are two: first, efforts on the part of each of us to maintain in practice a degree of tolerance for artworks other than those with which we are personally in sympathy; and second, support by the society at large of a radical decentralization of controlling judgment as to what is valued and collected.

This has lessons for the Smithsonian, lessons not confined to art. We who speak for or work in it have points of view, and nothing precludes us from forthrightly stating them. But we cannot escape from the cage of our own time, and have a duty to avoid actions that would foreclose the judgments and choices of those who will follow us.

So our primary obligation is to confront reality as best we are able, to study and communicate its complexity and the multiple perspectives from which it can be viewed. We make our greatest contribution to "the increase and diffusion of knowledge" simply by offering people a chance to view the art, setting forth the context as best we are able, and leaving them to make their own decisions as to how it is relevant to the circumstances and decisions facing them in their own lives.

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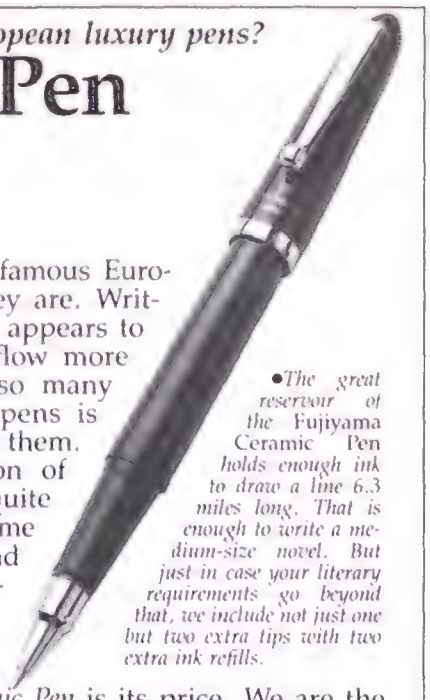

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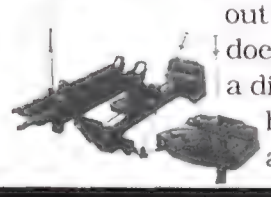

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# *Letters to the Editor*

## *Object at hand*

Dear Sir: I was one of a few hundred at the dock on Ford Island in Pearl Harbor when the great ship *Franklin* came in, en route stateside, as described in your November issue. Listing maybe 10 degrees, she was an 872-foot, black, cinderized hulk.

As she was being eased into a berth, a small group of men standing forward on her flight deck lifted their musical instruments and began to blow. When we on the dock realized what this ragtag combo was playing, we loosed a giant cheer that lasted for minutes. It was "Don't Fence Me In."

*Ira B. Harkey*
Kerrville, Texas

Dear Sir: In late 1945, I was one of 200 officers in the Panama Canal Zone awaiting transportation home from the Southwest Pacific after a year and a half overseas. Each day we called the transportation office to see if a ride was available. After a week of this came welcome news: at 0900 a ship was coming in that would "take ALL passengers."

Next morning, alongside the pier was berthed the *Franklin*—still on fire, with some of the bodies still wedged in the twisted wreckage. The message the ship had sent was "Can take NIL passengers." Someone had made a decoding error!

We waved goodbye as the gallant ship headed for Brooklyn Navy Yard.

*Joseph E. Huggins*
Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania

## *Red squirrels*

Dear Sir: The photographs of squirrels, especially the gray, brought back fond memories of my friend and pet Joe Nut.

I enlisted in the Air Force in May 1942, and while waiting to be called, drove a cab. Another driver caught a young squirrel and gave it to me.

I named him Joe Nut partly because it fit him and partly to kid the owner of a rival taxi company, Joe Nutt. Joe the squirrel and I became quite attached. Riding in my cab, he caused a sensation. Mothers called for the cab with the squirrel.

Joe rode on the sun visor and stared at the passengers. One day I picked up an Army captain at the train depot, and put him and his bag in the car. When I got around to the other side of the cab, he was standing on the street—he had seen Joe and told me to get the squirrel out of the cab. I took his bag out and drove off. Perhaps he walked uptown—the other cabs had all left the station.

Once I took Joe to New York on the train, in the pocket of my sport jacket. Just as the conductor was punching my ticket, Joe crawled out of the pocket, walked across my shoulders and into the pocket on the other side, while the conductor debated charging another fare.

Called to active duty in October, I gave Joe to the owner of the cab company and his family. A year later, back home on furlough, I was told that Joe sat in the window, where they had put him to watch me leave, for a couple of days without eating. When they put him out on the porch, he walked slowly down the steps and across the yard, then climbed up a tree. They never saw him again. I think Joe missed me as much as I missed him. I actually cried when I drove away from that house.

*Edward C. Kavenagh*
Dover, Pennsylvania

Dear Sir: In the 1970s I collected maple sap from 75 acres of sugarbush in central Maine. The sap ran downhill into tanks, through plastic tubing plugged into the trees.

A large population of red squirrels learned that by biting holes in the tubing a tasty drink of the sweet sap could be had. Over the years they cost me thousands of dollars in damage to tubing and lost sap, and wages of men walking the lines patching the tubing.

No matter how many little rascals we killed, the next year there were as many more. With no evergreens around for food, perhaps the diet of maple sap acted as an aphrodisiac.

*Theodore R. Harding*
Delray Beach, Florida

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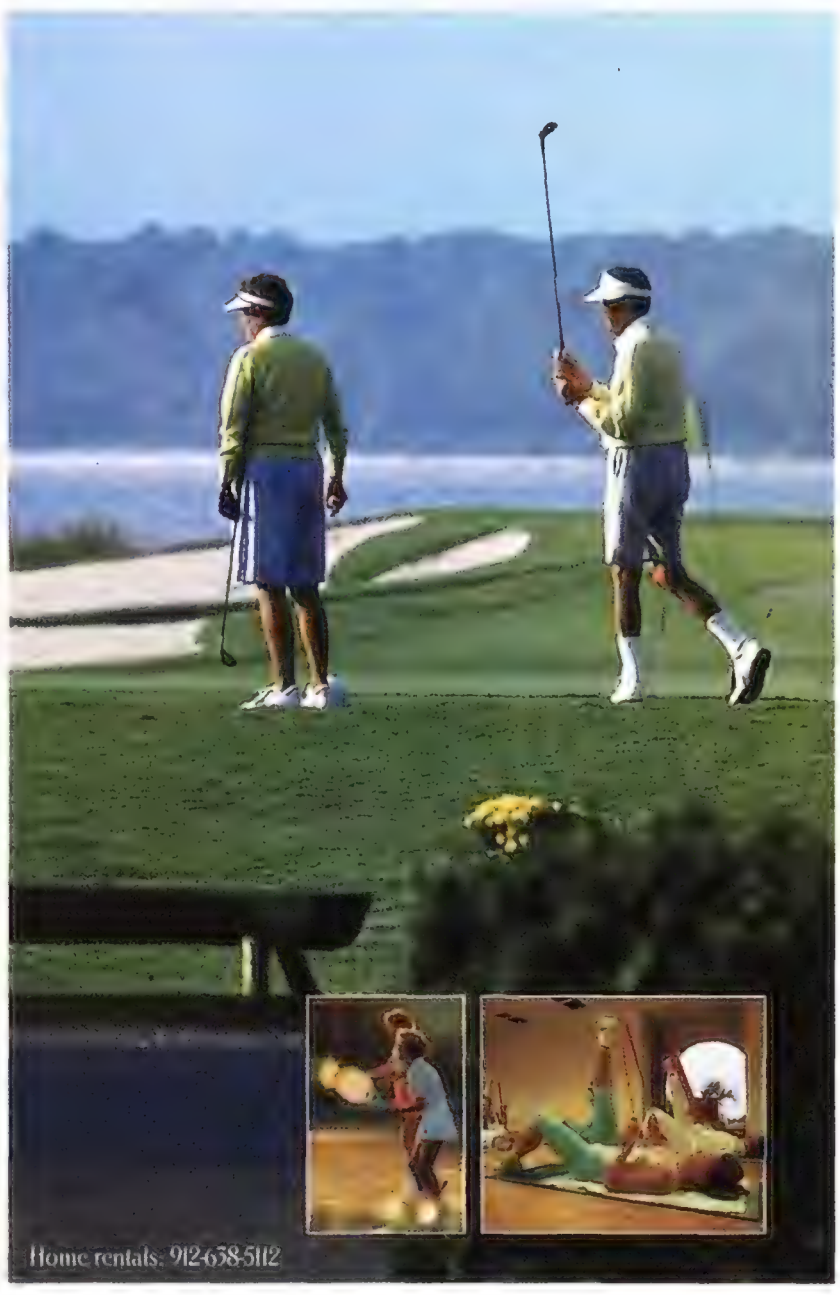


*A bowl of stars*

Dear Sir: New York City's Grand Central Terminal shares with the Villa Farnese a ceiling depicting the constellations in reverse, arching above the 80,000-square-foot main concourse.

The constellations are not from right to left as in the real sky, but rather from left to right.

"It is safe to say," touted a pamphlet issued to mark opening day in 1913, "that many school-children will visit Grand Central Terminal to study this representation of the heavens. . . . To insure astronomical accuracy and beauty of form, the highest authorities were consulted, including Dr. Jacoby of Columbia University."

Oh, Dr. Jacoby!

*Kenneth Weitzenhoffer*
Brooklyn

*Cookbooks*

Dear Sir: The library of chef Louis Szathmary, former chef-owner of The Bakery restaurant in Chicago boasts 50,000 cookbooks. This impressive assemblage is shared by Johnson and Wales University's Culinary Museum and Archives and the University of Iowa, with computer linkage.

*Fritz Blank*
Philadelphia

Dear Sir: My favorite recipe, from Alexandre Dumas' *Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine*, published posthumously in 1873, is a memorial to his gastronomic prowess. "ELEPHANT. . . . Take one or more feet of young elephant, skin them, and bone them after soaking in warm water for 4 hours. Cut them into 4 pieces lengthwise and once across. Parboil for 15 minutes. Dip in fresh water and dry with a cloth.

"On the bottom of a heavy pot with a tight lid put 2 slices of Bayonne ham, then your pieces of elephant foot, then 4 onions, a head of garlic, some Indian aromatic spices, ½ bottle of Madeira and 3 soupspoons of bouillon. Cover tightly and simmer for 10 hours. While cooking, remove the fat. Add 1 glass of port . . . 50 little green pimentos blanched in boiling water on high heat to preserve their color. The sauce must be very highly seasoned and well-flavored.

"The Indians don't go to all this bother . . . they are less versed than we in the mysteries of haute cuisine. They simply cook them in hot coals after

wrapping them tightly in rattan leaves."
*Norma B. Handloff*
Duxbury, Massachusetts

Dear Sir: Wyatt Cooper's "The huggin' and the kissin' don't last forever. The cookin' do" paraphrases a line from *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* by English writer George Meredith, first published in 1859, in which the doughty Mrs. Berry admonishes a young bride: ". . . don't neglect your Cookery. Kissing don't last: Cookery do!" Meredith's cynicism toward lasting love might be traced to his having posed for a friend, Pre-Raphaelite artist Henry Wallis, as the dead poet Thomas Chatterton—after which the ungrateful Wallis decamped with Meredith's wife. Enough to make anyone turn to the larder for solace.
*Connie Fitz*
South Pomfret, Vermont

## *Liveaboards*

Dear Sir: Ten years ago, at 57, I moved aboard a sturdy 37-foot sloop in Oakland. It wasn't all romance of the sea. Knots in the stomach learning to skipper, not just crew, on San Francisco Bay; trekking in the rain to the yacht club for showers; scrabbling for male crew; enduring the incredulous dockside stares of men who couldn't believe that a gray-haired lady was installing a track on the aluminum mast; scary trips to the Farallons; worried friends wondering why I had undertaken such an uncomfortable lifestyle.

When it was all over, the Oceanic Society presented me with a skipper's flag, cherished as it hangs on my study wall. Now living in a beautiful home amid family treasures, I wonder why, turtlelike, we have to carry along all this "stuff" to be happy. Those three years living aboard probably were the most challenging and fulfilling of my life. I'd do it again at the snap of a halyard.
*Jo Ann Ridley*
The Sea Ranch, California

## *The Canal Zone*

Dear Sir: Your mention of the dump brought memories of France Field, where we kids would find goodies from wrecked aircraft. I still have a Western Electric VT1 vacuum tube with which I made a one-tube radio; I could receive KDKA Pittsburgh in the Zone.
*Charles Fourcher*
Fairhaven, Massachusetts

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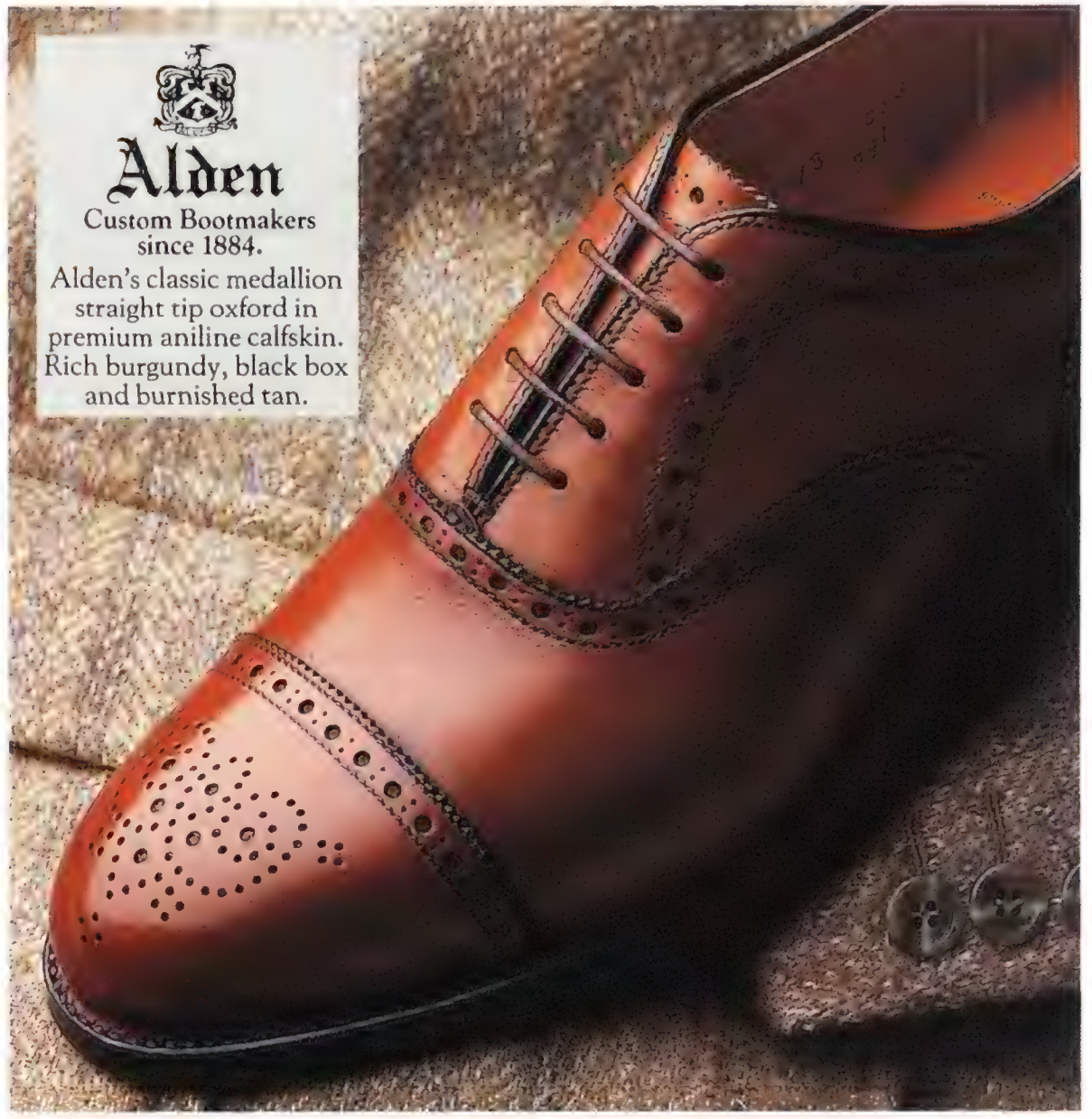
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Dear Sir: Pat Morgan's tropical garden above the Miraflores Locks was on tours for cruise passengers. The government of Panama recognized her beautification of public spaces through plantings by awarding her the Medal of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa in the 1970s. Pat also gave horticultural training to many Indians from the village of Tole, providing living arrangements and the opportunity to attend public school, basing work schedules on school schedules. She instituted training opportunities for Panamanians as well, hoping they would carry on the tropical gardens she had nurtured and cherished for more than 60 years.
*Caroline E. Van Mason*
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir: For seven years, 1957-63, I was the Canal organization's assistant information officer. I take exception to Posey's describing the Zone as a "flirtation with" and "bastion of" socialism.

The Canal Zone's civilian communities were in essence federal government company towns where only those working for the organization could live.

The lack of private enterprise was due to treaty provisions between the United States and the Republic of Panama, which banned most enterprises in the Zone that might offer competition to those in the Republic, and compelled the Zone to make its purchases in the Republic when feasible. Treaty language did not foster dabbling in socialism; rather, it was designed to nurture the development of Panama's agriculture, business and industry.
*Allen Alexander*
Cabin John, Maryland

## *Shakespeare & Company*

Dear Sir: If Shakespeare is to have a future in this country, it is crucial that this company receive the necessary funding to continue its programs and productions. It is indeed a "national treasure."
*Eric Corbett Williams*
Pelham, New York

## *Picture credits*

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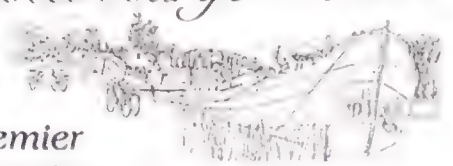

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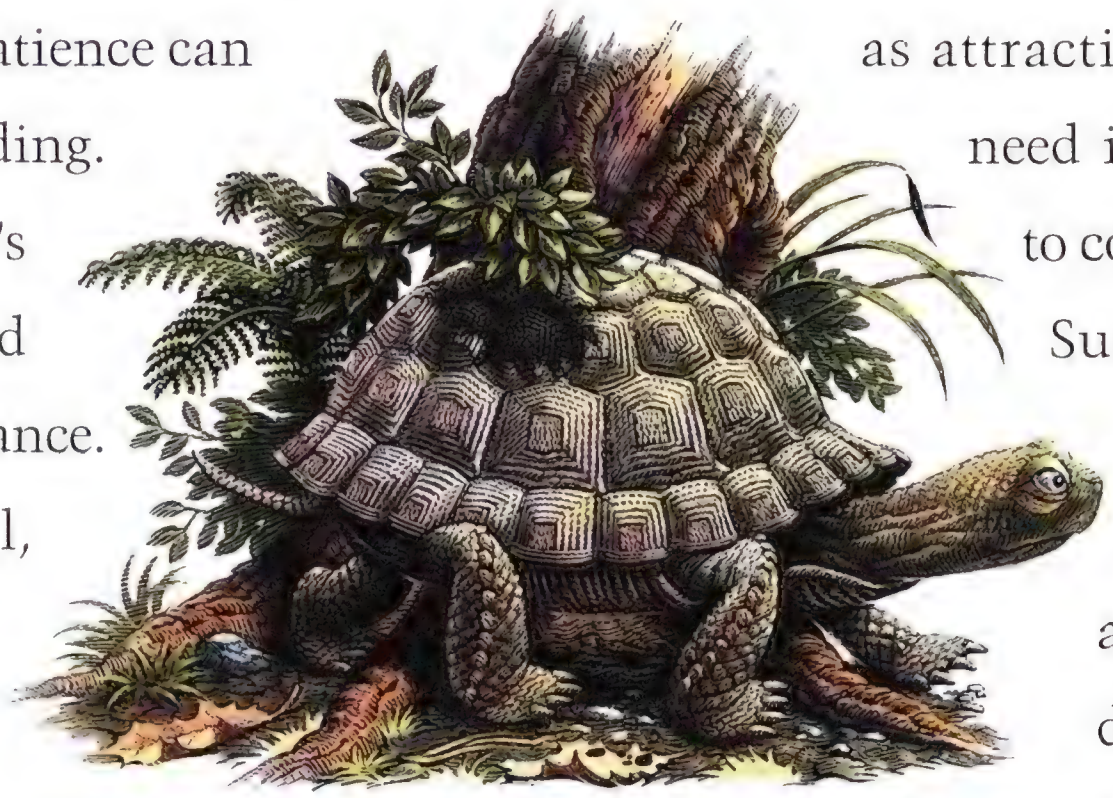

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# *Around the Mall and beyond*

Jim Hawkins found "great heaps" of gold in Ben Gunn's cave on Treasure Island. Allan Quartermain and his friends were dazzled by "a silvery sheen" of uncut diamonds encased in King Solomon's mines. Those two episodes are fictional. But when I entered the "Inner Sanctum" of the Smithsonian's Blue Room to look in awe upon a trove of glittering gemstones, it was really happening. I was taken to the Blue Room by John Sampson White, recently retired curator of minerals and gems at the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH). Since I saw him on the verge of his leaving the museum, he was in a nostalgic mood, noting for me the various phases of the gem collection over the years.

"This museum used to be a smaller, quieter place," he said, "and donations to the collection came easily because of the income tax break. That's all changed. We still get some important gifts—the red diamond that's on display, for example; the kunzite and pearl necklace designed by Paloma Picasso that Tiffany & Company gave us; and that 23,000-carat topaz you once wrote about (*Around the Mall*, August 1988). People think we have a stable of affluent friends waiting to donate. We don't. We have to do a little persuading these days."

The Blue Room, which was recently renamed for a former curator, Paul Desautels, is a persuasive place. It's a secure storage and work room. The Inner Sanctum is actually a lock-up vault. Both were set up years ago in the crammed, bewildering office and storage space behind the rotunda and the great galleries that museum visitors see. I wouldn't be able to find it again in a month of trying. Though not open to

the general public, most of the room's collection is waiting to go on display in the new Geology, Gems and Minerals Hall, scheduled to open in early 1995.

By their nature, the room's contents dazzle the few visitors who are invited here. It's a small room, painted a government-issue blue and carpeted in an equally drab hue. Its mystique, however, is not lost on me and I feel privileged to be here. Huge and valuable, not to mention beautiful, mineral formations line the walls. All sound is muted as if awaiting the soft sighs of admirers; and the lights seem to bring out the brilliance of the minerals.

"Everyone benefits from the Blue Room," says White, abstractedly fingering a tourmaline the color of two-hundred-dollar-a-bottle burgundy. "We bring possible donors here to give them a close look at what we have and to answer their questions. They love it, and we have a chance to watch them interact with our collection. Normally we curators create an exhibit and just walk away from it. Here we can see how it affects people."

At one end of the Blue Room is a discreet door, carefully locked, that leads to the smaller vault where the more valuable gemstones are stored—a mineral becomes a gemstone once it is polished and cut. White fiddled with the door and said, "Come on into the Inner Sanctum."

Here are great treasures indeed—including a photograph of Evalyn Walsh McLean (p. 24), last private owner of the Hope Diamond, wearing the 45.5-carat, ink-blue bauble *along with* the McLean Diamond and the Star of the East. "A former neighbor of the McLeans asked if we'd like the picture," said White. "I told her we certainly would. It's the only one we know of that shows Mrs. McLean wearing all three."

There are eye-boggling gems in this room: diamonds cut in the shapes of letters of the entire alphabet, a diamond-sapphire bracelet that noticeably increased my pulse rate, the largest euclase in the world. This last is a rare mineral found in large, facetable crystals. The greenish-yellow stone is on loan. White would dearly love to have gotten it for the Smithsonian collection, but the $40,000 price was just too much.

"The Institution's annual funding for the purchase of new gems amounts to $5,000, and of course that won't buy a thing these days," he says. Yet checks do still come in from the Smithsonian's faithful friends. White showed me a rainbow-colored tourmaline that the Institution bought for $12,000.

Some of these gems will also go on display in the new hall. But as in other Smithsonian collections, most of the items are kept for research—an extremely clear crystal, for example, is needed for accurate spectroscopic studies. The minerals and the occasional gemstone are sent to scientists in countries all over the world for study. "Our total inventory—and incidentally our computerization of it is probably the best in the world—comes to about 200,000 gems and minerals," White says.

Those gems and minerals I was seeing, of course, are among the most valuable. No labels disturb their emotional impact. But an ignoramus like me can't look at the array of sunstones, sapphires, beryls, tourmalines and other stones without wanting to know more about them.


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*Serving collectors for 17 years*

Picture of Evalyn McLean, last private owner of the Hope Diamond, sits among gem and mineral stores at NMNH.

It happens that a film exists—a video, *Gemstones of America*, produced by Creative Vision and STS Productions in association with NMNH. White plays a role in it and, though he modestly avers that he isn't very good on TV, agrees that the film does a fine job. I know it has taught me a lot, at my own pace, and with all the rewinding and repetition I need—and my wife can stand.

The video opens with blazing lava, indicating the violent primordial forces in Earth's upper mantle that produced our gems. Then the host, Efrem Zimbalist jr., emerges from a dank cave to show us the stone he has chipped from the walls, licking it first like a true "rock hound" (SMITHSONIAN, September 1991) to bring out its brilliance.

In one full, fast-moving hour we learn where these minerals are mined in the United States and what rocks may contain them. We visit mines, we hear tales of how their riches were discovered and we see them being worked.

A Montana sapphire hunter sought an ancient riverbed and hoped for gravelly sand to allow placer mining. He found everything just right for him along the banks of the upper Missouri in Montana: alluvial deposits that had been the bed of the ancient river. And now the place produces sapphires.

Beryls are practically always green or blue or pink or yellow stones. Emeralds and aquamarines are members of the beryl family. But the Harris Mine in the Wah Wah Mountains of Utah is the only place in the world where red beryl is found. The crystals appear in a gray volcanic rock. They're hot red in color and, says Zimbalist, rarer than rubies. Miners slip them in their mouth as they find them, then spit them out later. One says he "gets to eat a lot of dirt" but that a $5,000 beryl tastes good.

In Maine, in 1820, two young cousins walking in the woods near the town of Paris stumbled over a fallen tree. In its roots were bright crystals. Now fourth-generation miners endowed with classic Down East accents describe the tourmalines, cranberry red or rich green, that they still find in that granite pegmatite. One says that when he came upon a huge crystal, the "Jolly Green Giant," now on display at NMNH, he dug around it, almost reluctantly, "mentally fondling it," before finally removing it.

In California's Himalaya Mine, the tourmaline can be ruby red. We see one cylindrical crystal that changes from red at the bottom to a greenish blue and is capped in a deep, dark blue. The different colors are caused by the presence of various metals. At the Ponderosa Mine in Burns, Oregon, a miner shows how bulldozed lava is spread on a screen, enabling bright sunstones, uniquely colored by tiny copper flakes, to show up and make his day. He admits he's always "loved diggin' in the dirt."

Watching, you want to join him. But you become aware of the serendipity that often lurks in great mineral finds. Some people, the host says, "seem to have the touch." And you learn that a woman jogger in Montana, staring at the ground ahead of her Nikes, as joggers do, glimpsed a sparkle and plucked a 14-carat natural octahedron diamond from the roadside.

Arizona Indians have long been mining peridot, found in dark basalt on their reservation. They hammer the stone to get at the crystals, and you see one—olive green and bright as liquid.

The video shows a Navajo woman fashioning turquoise (the name means "Turkish") into gold and silver settings. This soft, workable stone was used in ancient Persia to adorn horses.

We learn about gem cutting: faceting crystals to sparkle; shaping softer stones—turquoises and sunstones—into cabochons, rounded and polished to show off their colors and their "cat's eyes."

The video is a beautiful way to learn. At the end of it, Zimbalist tells us to get off our duffs and start rock hunting.

Hey—I'm ready.

*Edwards Park*

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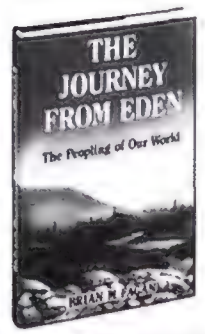


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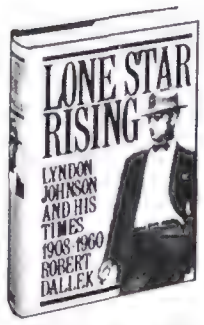


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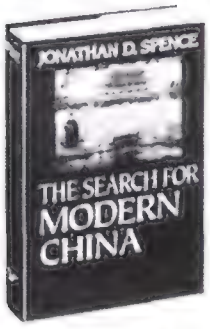


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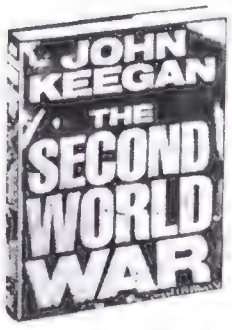


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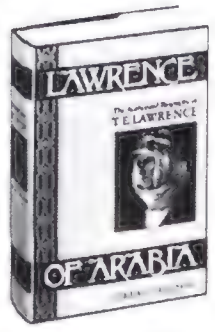


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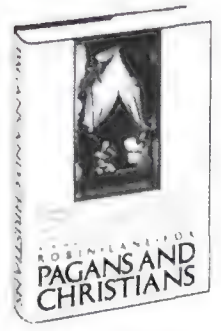


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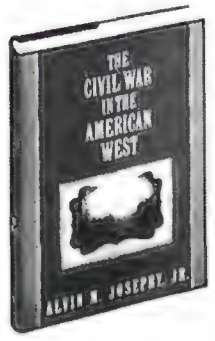


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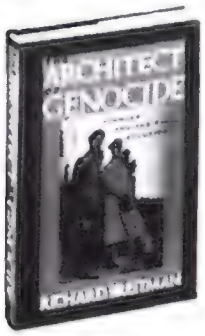


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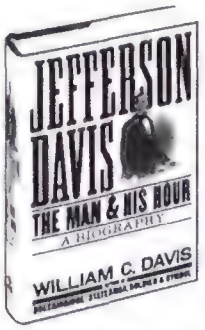


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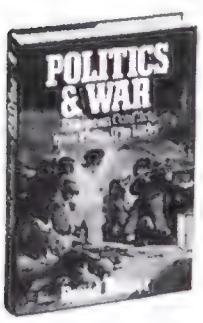


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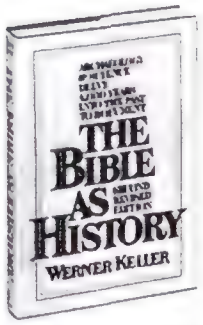


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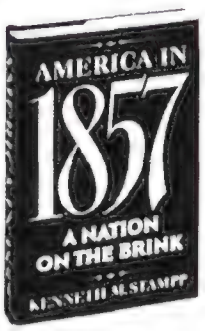


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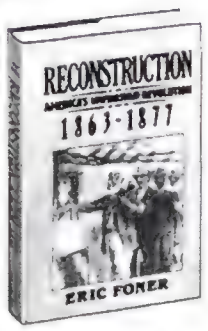


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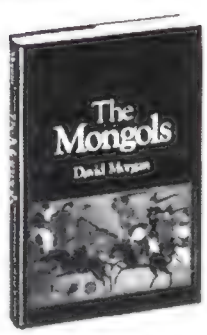


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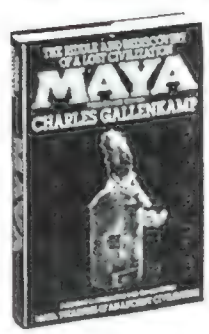


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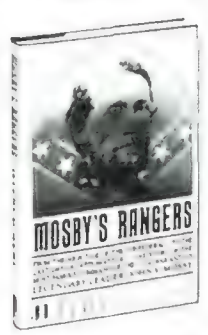


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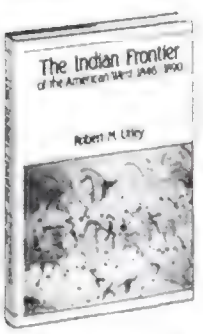


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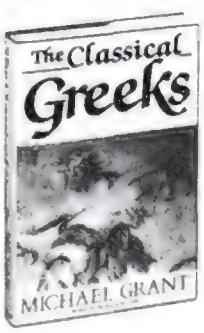


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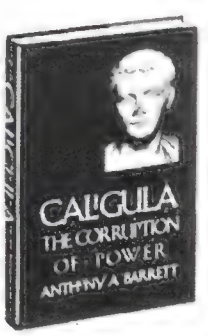


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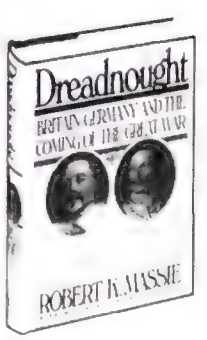


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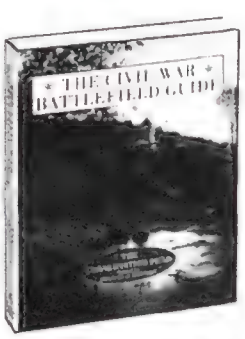


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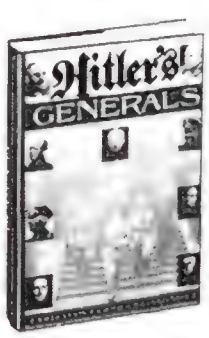


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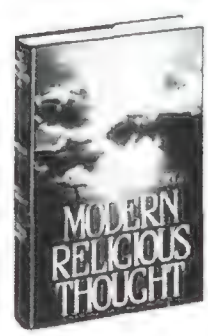


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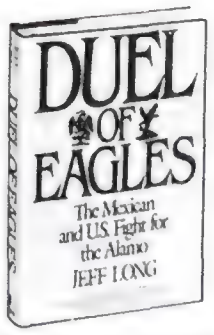


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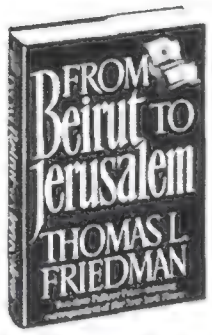


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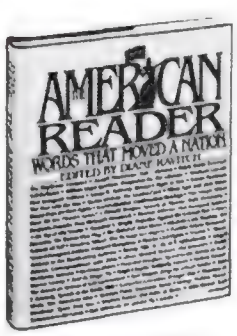


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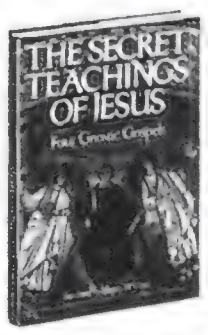


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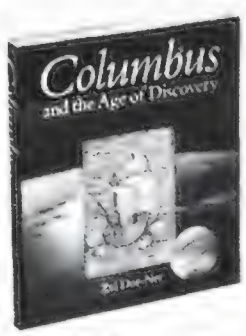


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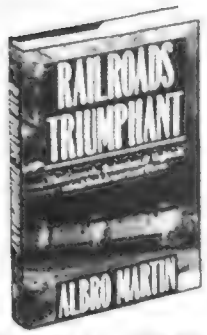


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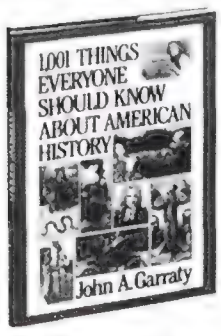


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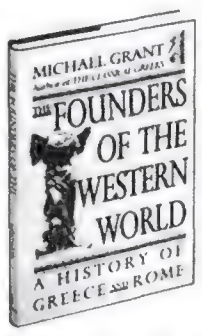


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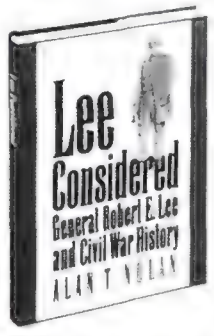


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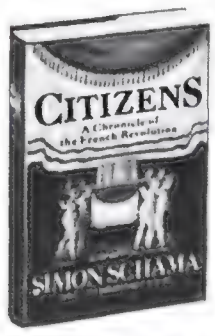


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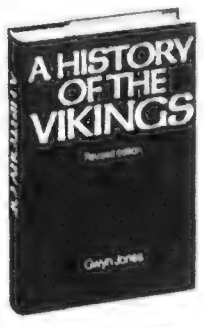


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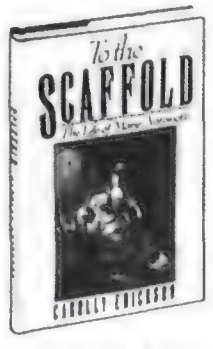


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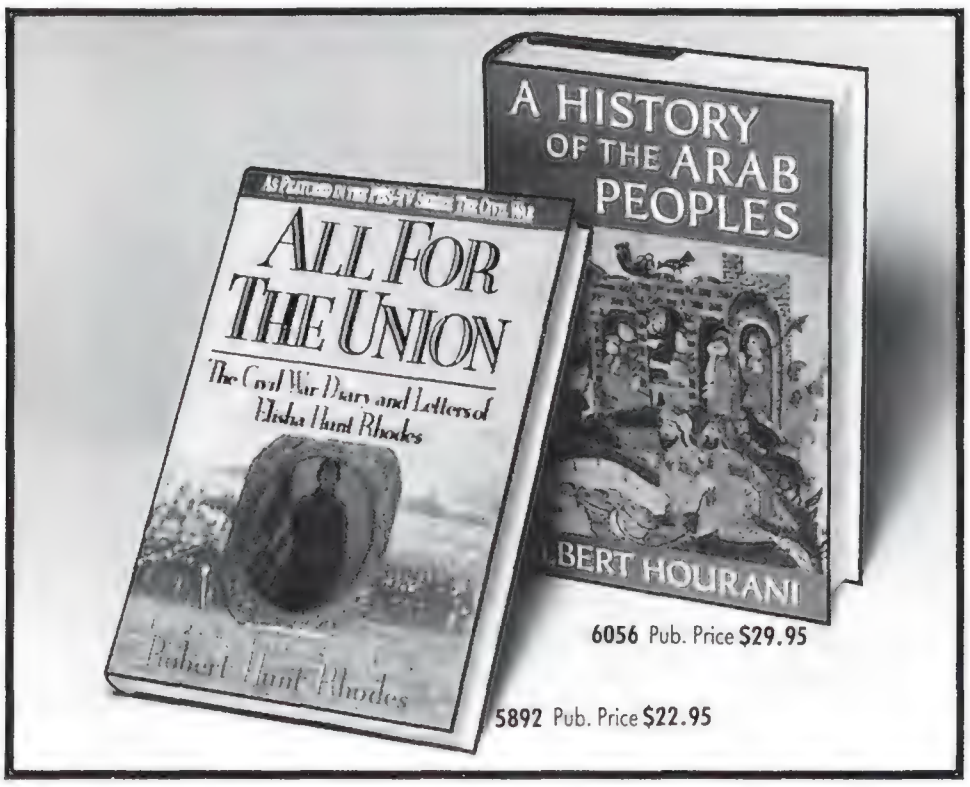
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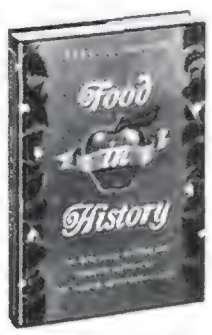


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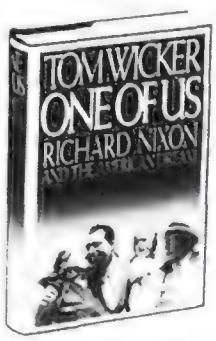


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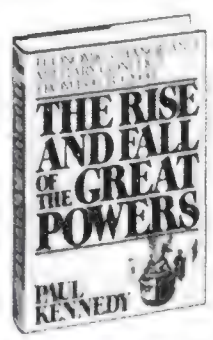


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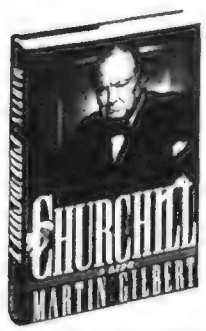


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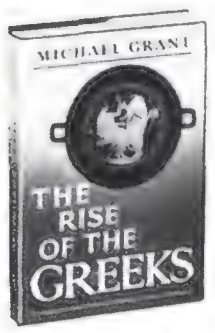


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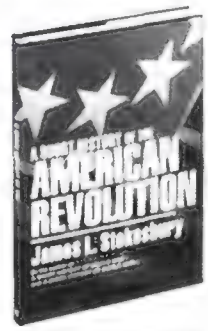


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*By John Fleischman*

# 'I sing of gods and men'— and the stones of fabled Troy

*On a windy hill rising from a plain in Turkey, an international team of archaeologists convenes to excavate layers of rubble and of history*

I went because they were digging again, in Hisarlik. In the 1990s the archaeologists are an international team, yet the spadework is in the hands of local Turkish workmen, just as it was in the 1930s, the 1890s and the 1880s. And just as it was in the 1870s, when the German merchant-prince-turned-scholar Heinrich Schliemann arrived here with deep pockets, a supply of English-made shovels and a well-thumbed copy of Homer's *Iliad*. He was looking for a place that was, in the opinion of leading scholars of his day, a myth, a destination about as tangible as Camelot, Atlantis or the Garden of Eden. At Hisarlik—or as we know it, Troy—Heinrich Schliemann found *something*. If modern archaeologists had returned for yet another attempt at defining that something, it seemed worth the trip.

I set out for Hisarlik in a season of impending war, arriving in Istanbul in the heat of summer with the local newspapers boiling up in black headlines that I could not read. Yet the television screens were awash in tanks, infantry and warships that I could not mistake. There I joined company with Coskun Aral, a Turkish photojournalist whose specialty for the past 15 years has been war—Lebanon, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Nicaragua, the West Bank and Belfast. The Trojan War, Coskun joked as we set out, would be his oldest war.

In a rented avocado-green Turkish Fiat, we headed west for the strategic Dardanelles, the narrow strait from the Aegean to the Sea of Marmara that divides Europe from Asia. This land is no stranger to war. On

Tourists peer out from massive mock-up of the Trojan horse, at entrance to legendary archaeological site.

Column fragments mark ruins of Greco-Roman agora (marketplace), bespeaking centuries of habitation here.

*Photographs by Coskun Aral*

*Excavating the 'ruin of a ruin'*

An archaeologist, atop newly installed supporting wall, takes up tools at edge of trench sunk by Schliemann.

the European side is the Gallipoli Peninsula, where some 130,000 Allied and Turkish soldiers perished in 1915. On the Asian or Anatolian side, 15 miles beyond the modern city of Canakkale, is the hill called Hisarlik.

Hisarlik is a small place, a sandy stone-strewn ridge cut up into gullies and hummocks. Troy, however, is immense. Its story sprawls across cultures, time and geography. Few places on Earth have so much heft in the human imagination. It still draws travelers by the busload, 2,000 visitors a day in summer. In the souvenir shops outside the gates of the archaeological park, they stock up on miniature Trojan horses, T-shirts and bumper stickers. Inside the park, the visitors clamber up the three-story wooden horse erected by Turkish tourist authorities to jazz up the site.

Tourists, of course, are not the only ones swarming over the site. One hundred and twenty years after Schliemann's first campaign, and some 50 years since the last expedition, led by the University of Cincinnati's Carl Blegen, the archaeologists are back at Troy. This time the scientific team includes Turks, Germans, Americans, Britons, Mexicans and Austrians, 64 members in all, under the firm hand of Manfred Korfmann (p. 39) of the University of Tübingen. Funded in part by the Daimler-Benz Company, Korfmann is directing a 15-year reexamination of the site described by archaeologists as a "ruin of a ruin."

To preserve the ruin at Hisarlik from utter ruin, the Korfmann team cleared out a half-century's worth of debris and shrubs, shored up the old excavations, particularly Schliemann's great trench, and imposed some order on the tourists so they could see the stones of history. Ancient tourists came during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, and visitors still come today for the same reason—this hill is the site of legendary Troy.

*Into the shadows of prehistory*

The archaeologists converging on Troy intend nothing less than an overview, and excavation, of Troy's numerous layers and 5,500 years of history and prehistory. They are working at one of the world's most ancient continuously inhabited sites. Korfmann and Sinan Kilic of Istanbul University have punched through what had been considered the deepest, or oldest, layer, into an even more ancient stratum, from 3500 B.C. This takes us into the very shadows of human prehistory.

At the other end of the site's time scale, two University of Cincinnati archaeologists—Brian Rose and Stella Miller-Collett—are excavating Hellenistic and Roman settlements that flourished at Troy until the sixth century A.D. Nearby, another German archaeologist, Dieter Hertel, is probing the knotty question of whether Hisarlik was completely abandoned after the

fall of Homeric Troy. He has found proof of ongoing habitation from the 13th to the 8th centuries B.C.

Off the beaten track, the Korfmann team has new housing, storage and lab facilities, but most of their fieldwork goes on before galleries of sun-dazzled tourists. At the lip of the great Schliemann trench, I listened to tour guides tell the tales of the Trojan War and Trojan archaeology—in German, Italian, Turkish, French, English and languages unknown to my ears. Each time, their charges dutifully photographed the archaeologists in yellow hard hats working quietly below. The actual digging is slow, methodical and not much of a picture from 30 yards away. When a Korfmann assistant, Martin Emele, ushered me around the ruin, I looked up to see tourists snapping us.

From a distance, the scope of the work can be hard to understand, Emele explained. The site is so complex that archaeologists working only a few yards apart can be investigating periods thousands of years apart in time. "The digging could go on forever," Emele said. "The more we excavate, the more questions come out." Often it isn't until day's end at Hisarlik that the different excavators get the chance to compare notes. The archaeologists retire to the "Helen of Troy" restaurant outside the gates and, over Turkish salads, spicy kabobs and cold beer, inflate and deflate one another's theories on what it all means. It's thirsty work.

An evening spent in such company invites, of course, the inevitable question. What is Troy to us that 3,200 years after the legendary fall of a legendary city, we still try to unravel her mysteries? "Why," as one eminent classics scholar has asked, "has the Western world such powerful memories of an old, old fight far away?"

We search for Troy because of Homer. Homer's *Iliad*, the story of the siege of Troy by an army of Greeks (or Achaeans, as Homer called them) under the great king Agamemnon, is the wellspring of Western literature. The characters resonate still, instantly recognizable in our imaginations—Agamemnon, Achilles, Hector, Helen, Paris, Priam and Hecuba. It is the very first poem that is distinctly European. Outside of religion, it is one of our oldest stories.

The tale is at once simple and ornate. Paris, a Trojan prince, arrives as a guest at the court of Agamemnon's brother Menelaus in Sparta. He is bewitched by the matchless beauty of Helen, wife of Menelaus, and abducts her. In revenge, Agamemnon and his retinue of warriors—including the great Achilles—converge from every corner of Greece to attack Troy.

After ten years' siege, an inspired strategem prevails: the Greeks feign retreat, announcing that they leave a gargantuan wooden horse as an offering to the goddess Athena. (Actually, the Trojan horse interlude is recounted in passing in the *Odyssey*, and in detail in Virgil's *Aeneid*, but that's another story.) The rejoicing Trojans pull the horse into the citadel. That night, as the hapless citizens sleep, Greek warriors hidden in the horse emerge to conquer the city. They slay the men, and take the women and children into slavery. The noble line of King Priam and his queen, Hecuba, has been cut down.

Visitors survey the remains of classical sanctuary, a sacred site from Archaic Greek to Imperial Roman eras.

The *Iliad*, as one scholar has put it, emanates from a world that was "witty, ironic, mordant, decorative, compassionate, energetic and human." It is the "first poem that gives equal dignity" to Trojans and Achaeans "and shows the 'enemy' in a compassionate and noble light." Of the *Iliad*'s great power and influence, there has never been any argument. Of its historical truth and its origins, there has never been anything but.

Homer, if there was a single "Homer," probably never "wrote" a word of the *Iliad*. It was almost certainly composed orally as a long poem to be sung in the palaces of Greece in the seventh century B.C., as that civilization awakened from a long, violent and illiterate dark age. It was probably not written down until the sixth century B.C. in Athens.

However it was first created, the *Iliad* and its companion, the *Odyssey*, were clearly about events from a time the ancient Greeks considered ancient. Herodotus fixed the date of the Trojan War at 400 years before Homer's time, or about 1250 B.C. by our modern calendar. (In terms of American history, imagine the first

*Cincinnati-based John Fleischman, who last wrote for* SMITHSONIAN *on Tower of London armor, is working on a book about Troy and the human imagination.*

*Text continues on page 34*

# A Storied Hill Called Hisarlik

*Freighted with history and legend, the stony ridge of Troy endured as a series of great citadels for 3,500 years. Archaeologists now divide the complex site into nine principal strata. The oldest (or deepest) settlement, Troy I, survived as an Early Bronze Age fortress for several hundred years. A sophisticated, innovative people built Troy II and its palace, one of the splendid achievements of the age. (Schliemann unearthed the treasures he called "Priam's" from this level.) The two successive strongholds Troy III and IV, dating as well from the Early Bronze Age, grew into substantial walled towns. But neither these fortresses, nor Troy V, attained the grandeur that was Troy II. As the Late Bronze Age dawned, a new ruling dynasty created the great and powerful Troy VI—Homer's Troy (bottom right). Impoverished Troy VII rose from the rubble in the Late Bronze Age. Greek colonists, tradition holds, founded the town that grew into thriving Ilion, or Troy VIII. Over its ruins the Romans raised the city of Ilium, Troy IX, with its elaborate public architecture. Recently, archaeologists have discovered proof of habitation into the 13th century A.D.*

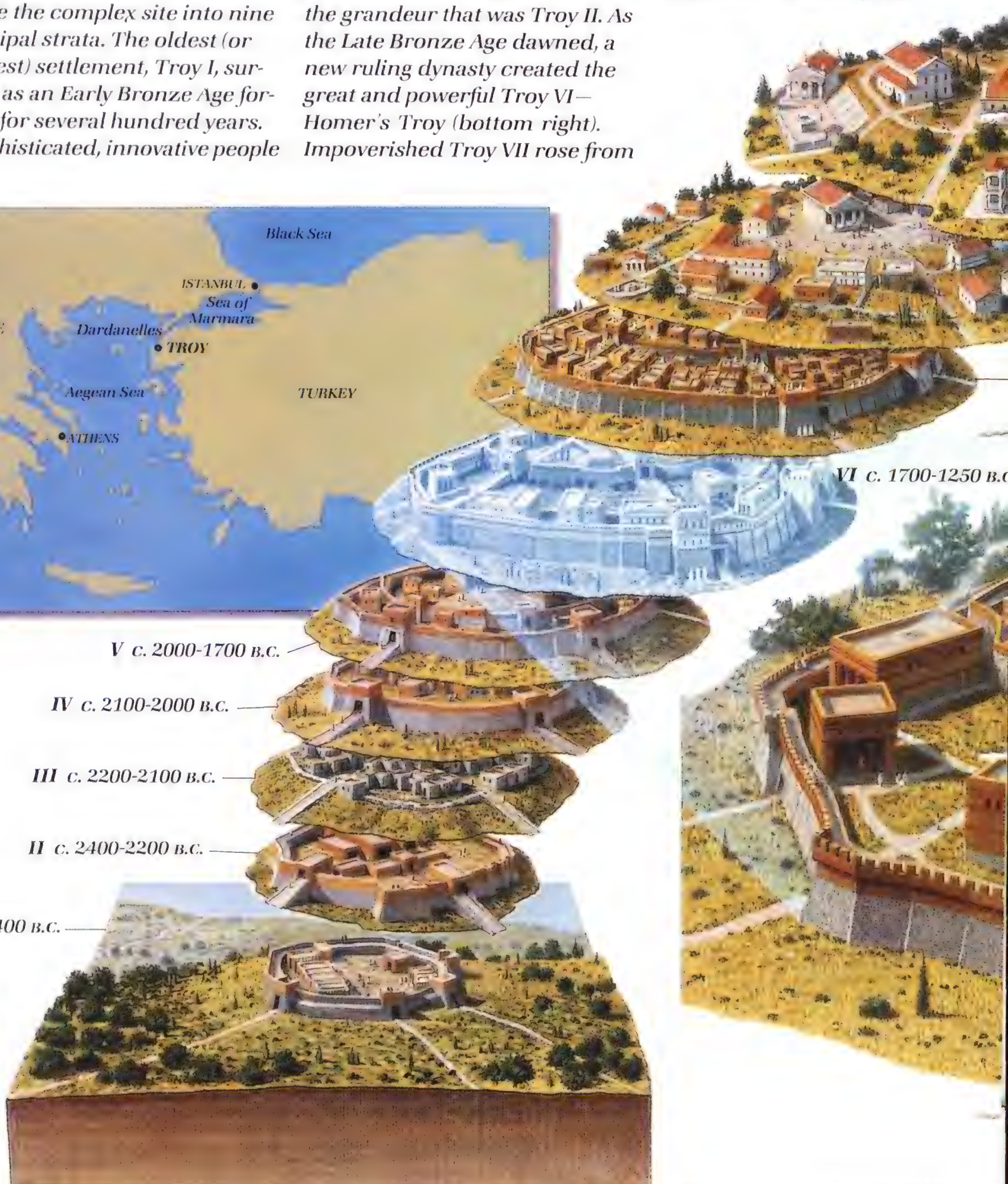
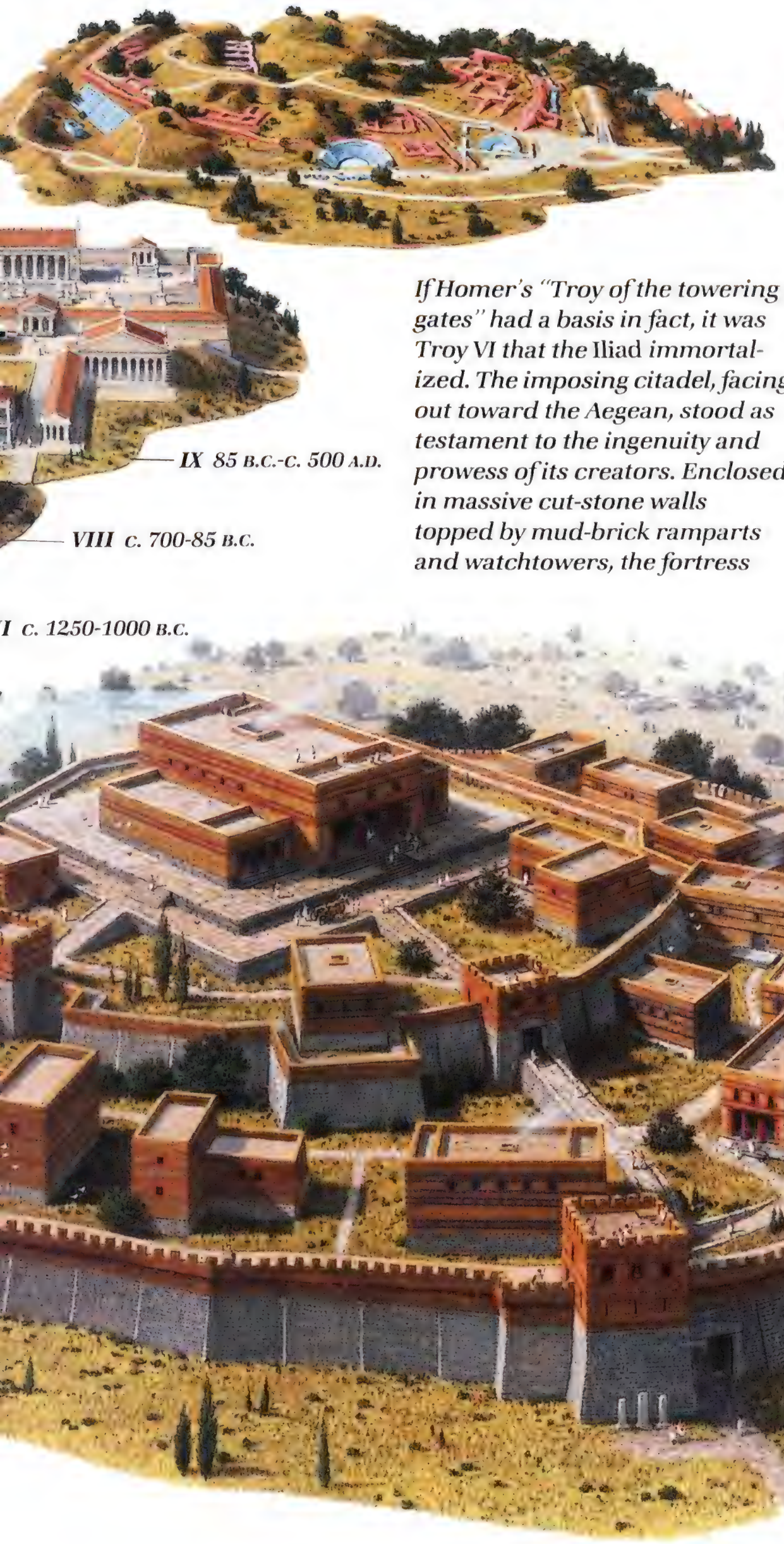



*Illustration for* SMITHSONIAN *by Lloyd K. Townsend*




### *Troy Today*

- *EARLY BRONZE AGE*
- *LATE BRONZE AGE*
- *CLASSICAL*

*If Homer's "Troy of the towering gates" had a basis in fact, it was Troy VI that the* Iliad *immortalized. The imposing citadel, facing out toward the Aegean, stood as testament to the ingenuity and prowess of its creators. Enclosed in massive cut-stone walls topped by mud-brick ramparts and watchtowers, the fortress housed a magnificent town. Laid out in concentric terraces and transected by broad streets, Troy VI consisted of two tiers. The lower precincts contained stone manor houses, most likely private dwellings. Within an inner wall stood temples and palaces, the heart of Hisarlik's richest, most enduring citadel.*

***Homeric Troy***

coherent account of the Battle of Gettysburg not being recorded until A.D. 2563.) The *Iliad* was not the only Trojan War story, but instead, one version drawn from a vast and varied cycle of Trojan War tales.

The Greek historians argued about the *Iliad*'s truth. The Romans took up the fight, and 2,000 years later, by the time Heinrich Schliemann turned up in Ottoman Turkey, the learned men of Europe and America had finally settled the Homeric problem: Troy, experts agreed, was a metaphor. Homer's Troy, argued 19th-century scholars, was no more a real citadel than Homer's Mount Olympus was the real home of the divine Zeus. At Hisarlik, Schliemann—who is regarded by many as the father of archaeology—was determined to disprove a metaphor, using his English shovels.

*Hisarlik: a layer cake of Troys*

In recent years, Schliemann's motives and methods have been challenged. Most regrettably, he drove a crude trench straight down as he worked, creating mayhem for future excavators. But he was right on the central issue, according to Machteld Mellink, an archaeologist from Bryn Mawr College and a member of the latest archaeological team to follow in Schliemann's footsteps. "This is the place," she told me as we surveyed the ruins of Hisarlik. "He got that right."

Hisarlik is not a natural hill. It is, as Schliemann discovered, a mound of dead citadels, a layer cake of Troys. Today the archaeologists talk of nine principal layers with 45 "phases." They number them from Troy I, a substantial Early Bronze Age settlement built around 3000 B.C. The layer closest to the surface is Troy IX, site of the elegant Roman city that lasted until the sixth century A.D.

Believing that Homer's ancient Troy must lie at the oldest, or deepest, layer of the site, Schliemann struck down to the bottom of the hill. He mistakenly deemed an early burned stratum "Priam's city." This layer, and the fabulous artifacts Schliemann unearthed there, turn out to be much older than he could have guessed. Scholars now know Schliemann was digging in layer Troy II, dated about 2400-2200 B.C.—or at least 1,000 years *before* Homer's Troy.

German archaeologists working the site during the two post-Schliemann excavations in the 1890s, and Americans digging in the 1930s, eventually determined the actual location of Middle to Late Bronze Age Troy, or what might be called Homer's Troy. The Middle to Late Bronze Age citadel lies more or less at the center of the layers. Archaeologists now label this stratum Troy VI, dating from about 1700 to 1250 B.C.

By this time, Bronze Age Troy was a magnificent walled city. The citadel we now call Troy VI was tiered in concentric terraces and protected by superb cut-stone walls, 16 feet thick and 13 feet or more high, topped by brick ramparts. If Homer's epithets had any basis in fact, it was a memory of the "beetling towers" of Troy VI he celebrated. This city on the hill also beckoned as a worthy target for the skilled seafaring and aggressive people of Greece, whom Homer remembered as the Achaeans. We call them the Mycenaeans.

In 18th-century rendition of Trojans' fatal blunder, city rejoices as wooden horse is drawn inside the gates.

It was this legendary Troy, of course, that obsessed Heinrich Schliemann. He arrived on the Aegean coast in 1868, a self-made multimillionaire obsessed with Homer—and consumed by a determination to prove the scholars wrong. He vowed to uncover the actual stones of Homer's Troy. Schliemann was a singular character, the "quintessential 19th-century hero," according to one historian.

As Schliemann told it, he was a poor but insatiably curious son of a German pastor, and he was given a children's picture book that showed Troy in flames. His father told him the picture was fanciful and that Troy was only a storybook city. But the boy silently vowed to find it. He started out as a grocery clerk. Clawing his way up the ladder of international commerce, Schliemann amassed a fortune, trading in, among other things, saltpeter during the Crimean War

The steed "tall as a cliff," as told in the *Aeneid*, held "men fully armed," bringing "all shapes of death."

and gold nuggets in the California gold rush. Mere wealth was no longer enough, and he threw himself into a frenzy of self-education, mastering some dozen modern languages in addition to the classical tongues. Then he set out, a short, balding adventurer, wandering the Aegean to match his beloved Homer against the seedy reality of 19th-century Greece and Ottoman Turkey.

It was not a mission for the fainthearted. Schliemann approached Hisarlik with blind faith, convinced that the site "fully agrees with the description Homer gives. . . . That hill seems destined by nature to carry a great city . . . there is no other place in the whole region to compare with it." He excavated for nearly three years, braving every hardship—blinding heat, scorpions, malaria, dust storms, rainy seasons and fierce north winds.

His dogged determination resulted in an extraordinary discovery. In 1873, he unearthed a splendid treasure—golden cups, vases and jewelry, intricately worked bracelets, earrings and diadems. Schliemann promptly christened his find the "Treasure of Priam." His announcement electrified the world. (And incensed the Turks—he spirited the finds off to Athens, and ultimately into Germany.)

Yet nagging doubts assailed even a megalomaniac like Schliemann. Archaeology was in its infancy; he had no way to date his finds with precision. Unfortunately, most of the treasure vanished from Berlin as the Allies advanced in May 1945; many questions about Schliemann's finds remain unanswered. Last spring, Russian journalists reported that the treasure had been moved to Moscow in 1945. Negotiations for its return to Germany or Turkey are in progress.

At Hisarlik, Korfmann's team of archaeologists, following in Schliemann's footsteps, are not expecting to unearth the shield of Achilles or the hind legs of the actual Trojan horse. Instead, one of the greatest finds so far is a 5,000-year-old charred wooden post that will yield a wealth of information, after its more than 200 growth rings are matched with known tree-ring and radiocarbon chronologies.

Yet Korfmann still asks the question that consumed everyone who excavated before him: Why is Hisarlik the center of so many stories about war? In Homer, the seduction of Helen by the Trojan prince Paris sets off the war. Korfmann believes the answer lies not in Helen's legendary beauty—"the face that launched a thousand ships"—but in historical reality, shaped by forces as basic as wind and current and trade patterns. His investigations focus on the explosive mix of geography, piracy and aggression that might explain the rise and fall of so many Troys.

A working dig is probably the worst place to discuss archaeology with an archaeologist, especially one managing a three-ring international circus of science, diplomacy and tourism. Yet somehow Manfred Korfmann made time for a twilight conversation on the porch of the new visitors' center. As the heat and dust of the day settled, he stretched out his tired legs and, looking out through the almond trees that screen the busy parking lot, hymned the joys of international scientific cooperation and the generosity of the Turkish government in allowing this massive undertaking. And then he began to talk about shepherds.

*At dusk, setting out with the flocks*

He had noticed how in summer the shepherds of the region go out with their flocks only at night. The animals refuse to eat or drink in the fierce summer heat. Come evening, the sheep browse the rough hills at a gentle walk, herdsman and flock covering six miles or more before turning for home. Korfmann imagined a Bronze Age shepherd, setting out at dusk from the mighty citadel of Troy. It is about five miles as the crow flies from Troy southwest to Besik Bay.

It still exists, a shallow cove on the Aegean, sheltered behind a steep headland to the north. Schliemann himself surveyed Besik but, finding nothing, turned his attention back to Hisarlik. The wind and the currents

of the Dardanelles region brought Korfmann to Besik for another look.

The Dardanelles is the outlet for all the great rivers of the interior—the Danube, the Don and the Dnieper—that pour into the Black Sea. The water flows through the Bosporus and down the Sea of Marmara. As the land narrows, the westward current surges through the Dardanelles at an average of about three miles per hour. The current is often driven by a prevailing north wind that can hold for weeks and months at a time.

How could the sailing ships of the ancient world have made headway against that great power? It would take a perfectly timed approach by a galley under oar and sail to run the Dardanelles. And when the wind was not right, where was the best place to wait? Korfmann studied topographical maps, old sailing manuals of the Mediterranean and meteorological charts. Then he followed his hypothetical Bronze Age shepherd to Besik. There, Korfmann believes, he found the cause of the Trojan wars, not one but many wars.

*Watching, waiting: princes in the citadel*

He imagines the scene, 3,200 years ago, like this. In the small hours of the night, the flocks move quietly over the hills from Troy until they reach Besik. Unobserved, the shepherd counts the campfires on the beach below, looking for new arrivals. Long before dawn, the princes in the citadel at Troy have word: another ship of foreigners bound for the Dardanelles has been driven into Besik Bay.

Bronze Age ships carried no more than 50 rowers. Appearing without warning, a war party from the citadel could overpower them easily. Perhaps their leader took the ship's master aside, Korfmann suggested. Favorable winds might not come for some time, the armed prince might have said. "You could be our guest for months. Your ship has many rich things on board. Perhaps you'd like to give us something." Extortion or "dockage" fee, the message was clear to the sailors.

"Troy was known and disliked for this throughout the eastern Mediterranean for centuries," Korfmann told me. His proof is a Bronze Age mariners' cemetery that he uncovered in the lee of the Besik headland. It was clearly the burial ground of foreigners because of the sheer variety of funerary customs, everything from tomb burials to cremations. No native culture could have practiced so many different rites simultaneously.

He also found on the crest of the headland an even older settlement, dating back to 3000 B.C., additional evidence of the strategic placement of Besik Bay. Korfmann describes Troy as a "pirate fortress," using the term without moral overtones. "Whoever sailed through these straits was obliged (whether by choice or necessity) either to remain on good terms with the inhabitants of Hisarlik or to force them into submission," Korfmann observed. The masters of Hisarlik were in position to collect the toll at Besik. But the citadel was itself a tempting target for raiders after plunder or attackers after revenge—and the source of what Korfmann calls the "many Trojan wars here, taking place perhaps every 10 or 20 years."

Hisarlik remained a great place long *after* the "pirate fortress" of Troy—or what we might call Homer's Troy—was brought low by the end of the 13th century B.C. Hence the many layers of settlements, weighted one on another, that lie above Troy VI.

The classical settlement of Ilion, or Troy VIII, generally dated about 700 B.C., rose on the site of Bronze Age Troy. The Greek colonists eventually created a thriving city here. By the fifth century B.C., Ilion attracted the Persian king Xerxes, on his way to "avenge" the fall of Troy on the impudent descendants of its Greek conquerors—at least according to Herodotus. And so, on the eve of the Battle of Salamis, Xerxes arrived in Ilion, where he "sacrificed a thousand oxen to the Trojan Athena," and ordered his priests to pour "libations of wine to the great men of old."

More than a century and a half later, Alexander the

Local children, with their donkey, pointed the author in direction of Besik Bay when he lost his bearings.

Stones of a prehistoric hamlet attest to the strategic importance of headland overlooking Besik Bay landfall.

Great arrived at Troy to pledge a lavish temple to Athena. He ran naked around the tomb of Achilles and underscored his political claims to being the spirit of a newly united (by his sword) Greece. The first Roman emperors honored "sacred Ilium" (they built temples and made the place tax-exempt) because they venerated Troy as the "mother city" of Rome.

The mad emperor Caracalla came in the third century A.D. to relive the story of Achilles and his fallen love, Patroclus, by poisoning one of his own servants and mounting lavish funeral games in his dubious honor. The tradition of "reclaiming" the Trojan story continued to A.D. 1453, when Mehmet II rode into town at the head of a Turkish army, proclaiming that the Greek sack of Troy had at last been avenged.

Yet these images wavered, and evanesced, as I set out one afternoon into the countryside stretching out from Hisarlik. I was in search not of these latecomers, not of the waves of classical Greeks and Hellenes, Romans, Byzantines and Muslims who successively inhabited the site of Troy. Like Schliemann before me, I came in search of Homer's Troy. With only a smudgy, copied map, photographer Coskun Aral and I drove into the Turkish outback. We were looking for the cause of the Trojan wars on a wind-blasted headland called Besik.

We had spotted the flash of sunlight on wide waters as we came overland from Hisarlik. Then we lost our way, blundering into a tangle of farm lanes along the sandy bluffs above the Aegean. Eventually we found a road of sorts that ran steeply down to a deserted narrow beach. Was this Besik? I edged the car forward. The road, now really a track, headed uphill again toward a high headland. That looked more promising, but the grade grew steeper, the ruts deeper and the footing softer. Finally, the bottom of the car went gently aground in the sand. That's done it, I thought. We're stuck. We're lost. We're miles from where we want to be and miles from help.

Then, over the crest of the hill came four young farm boys and a very old donkey. We stared at one another in astonishment. Before the boys could bolt, Coskun hurriedly stuck his head out the window and shouted in Turkish, Which way to Besik? Which way to the *kazi*, the excavation? Oh, the *kazi*, the diggings are just up there, they said, pointing to the headland. But you must walk.

We pressed forward on foot. The boys and the donkey faded back as we climbed the sandy headland.

Re-creation of Schliemann's shanty-headquarters gives visitors a glimpse of hardships endured at Hisarlik.

Coskun and I were on our own again, threading a way between stunted oak and thorny sedge. The sea wind was rising in our faces, blowing straight out of Homer.

Ahead I could see an automated navigation beacon on the tip of the headland. This had to be the place. This headland was still a mariner's landfall in the 20th century A.D., just as it was in the 13th century B.C. for the Bronze Age Trojans. A wide bay spread out to the south of the sheltering point. Far out in the Aegean, I could make out ancient Tenedos and its outliers, the islands that Homer said Achilles had conquered on his way to the siege of Troy. I turned back to the climb. Through the scrub, I caught a glimpse of an excavated wall, and below it, a spoil bank of pink debris.

I hurried forward. Before me, a string of excavated ancient foundations marched up the spine of the headland. This was the *kazi.* This was Manfred Korfmann's Early Bronze Age hamlet overlooking the sea at Besik. And somewhere behind us was the Bronze Age sailors' cemetery that Korfmann had discovered in 1984.

Coskun and I sprinted the last few yards to the top. The wind nearly knocked me off. It hammered at my face, my hat, my sunglasses. I hunched forward, squinting north along the coast toward the Dardanelles. Below me, whitecaps driven by the relentless wind from the north broke at the foot of the headland. I was giddy with the height, the wind, the exhilaration of discovery. Here was the mechanism behind the Trojan wars—the current running at three miles an hour straight out of the Dardanelles with a following wind.

Here under the lee of the Besik headland, the ancient sailors had run for shelter in the last safe harbor before the strait. They dragged their galleys onto the sandy beach and camped until the wind turned, a wait that in these latitudes could last for days, weeks and even months. For some of the sailors—bored, quarrelsome, sick or just old—the wait became eternal. In the cemetery, the archaeologists found 100 burial "structures"—giant pithoi, stone circles, urns, a cist grave and rock-lined tombs.

Suddenly I realized that two of the boys and the donkey had rejoined us. This was, after all, their domain. They had come back to keep an eye on the two intruders. I thought of Korfmann's patrolling Bronze Age shepherd. I knew that here, at Besik, we had reached the headland where the legends of the many Troys had their beginning.

In Korfmann's view, the Trojan levy on wind-bound shipping was collected probably all the way back to 3000 B.C., when a small, windswept hamlet perched on the headland above the beach at Besik. Eventually, he theorizes, the hamlet became too exposed, both to wind and sea raids. But inland, a citadel, perched on a hill to be called Hisarlik, rose against the horizon, and over time grew stronger and richer. Centuries later, the citadel of Late Bronze Age Troy stood there.

It is still a potent legend. After the wind finally drove us from the headland at Besik, after the boys and the donkey shadowed us back to the car and after Coskun rescued it from the sand trap with a few deft twists of the wheel, I came down with a bad case of Homeric intoxication. I envisioned warriors holding aloft golden shields, wondrously incised; I heard clashing armies in the night and the ancient queen Hecuba shrieking from the ramparts as the Greeks hurled her infant grandson from the walls of a flaming citadel.

Leaving Besik and heading back toward Hisarlik, Coskun drove in silence. "Which way now?" he asked at last. We were at a crossroads in a wide dusty plain filled, as far as I could see, with irrigated fields of ripe tomatoes and cotton.

We were lost again. A shepherd got us home. He was an old man in a flat cap, standing by the road without a flock but with his white sheepdog. Coskun slammed on the brakes and reversed back to him. The dog barked madly. Coskun asked the way to Truva, to Troy. I could see the old man clearly now. He wore a suit jacket and mismatched pants. The pin-striped trousers were so worn that the knees had disappeared and been lovingly patched with bands of new cloth. Coskun spoke to him in Turkish, but I could see how the two of us appeared in his eyes—foreigners. Foreigners looking for Troy. Not the first. Not the last. He leaned his shepherd's crook against his shoulder and pointed to the turning. "Truva," he said. His dog ran after the car, barking until we were gone in a cloud of dust, bound for Hisarlik.

Manfred Korfmann works in the shadow of Homer as he directs 15-year reexamination of the stones of Troy.

Robert A. Flischel

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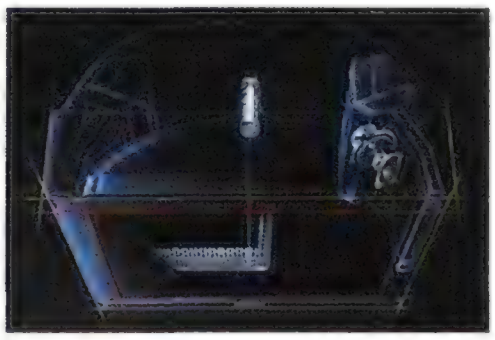

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*By Jim Robbins*

# Care for a little Hellish Relish? Or try a Hotsicle

*Why not? You can eat hot chile peppers fresh or dried, or you can get fancy. But one thing's for sure: you'll never forget the first time*

Aghhh! A Santa Fe chilehead tries to will his right hand to reach for habanero remedy—tortillas and salt.

Behind the bright-blue swinging doors of the Gallito, a neighborhood bar in Mérida, Mexico, the air is cool and dark, a refuge from the clothes-drenching heat and humidity of a late spring day on the Yucatán peninsula. A dozen men sit at a bar beneath quietly spinning ceiling fans, laughing and talking as a bevy of framed and faded *Playboy* foldouts look on. It is siesta time, when people in this former Spanish colonial city eat lunch, then rest or nap to escape the midday heat before returning to work.

Not everything, however, is cool in the Gallito. After beer, the most popular item here is the habanero chile, a little green pepper ubiquitous on the Yucatán, gnarly, waxy and beautiful, about the size of a thumb. One way or another, it's on every plate: free while you drink are corn cakes covered with ground pork and bits of chile; chopped chile, tomato and onion sprinkled on fried pork rind; hot pepper soup.

Hard-core habanero lovers, though, eat them one way. In a tiny kitchen as hot as a blast furnace a Mayan woman roasts chiles to order. She plucks a chile pepper from a basket and lays it next to the black metal grate atop a blue gas flame, where it roasts until the skin turns black and blisters on all sides. It's placed on a small plate with a lime wedge and sent on to a beer drinker, who slits the smoking pepper open, douses it with lime juice and sprinkles salt on it. He eats prudently. Small and innocuous looking, the habanero is uncontested as the hottest pepper in the world, the mother of all peppers. As one habanero lover puts it, "When you chop, it smells good, and entices you to eat." But when you do, "It feels like your lips are going to fall off." Afterward, you feel good. One food writer calls it "culinary skydiving."

It's hard to overestimate the passion people all over the world have for eye-watering, mouth-searing, tongue-numbing, sweat-inducing chile peppers. Revered in ancient civilizations, nearly worshiped by some chefs, eaten daily by people from Mexico to Thailand, from Indonesia to Africa, the chile pepper is, for many, *the* spice of life. One country where chile peppers are not a staple is the United States, outside of the Southwest. That, however, appears to be changing. Chile peppers—forgive me for saying this—are hot.

So great is the love for chiles that a subculture has formed. Prominent among "chileheads" is Dave DeWitt, coauthor of *The Whole Chile Pepper Book* and editor of *Chile Pepper*, a bimonthly publication based in Albuquerque with about 55,000 readers. "I don't know why chile peppers turn me on," DeWitt says with a shrug. "Why not squash or beans? I don't know. I guess it's a combination of the size, the color, the shape. And the heat of course. I can't imagine a magazine devoted to bell peppers."

To leaf through DeWitt's glossy publication is to

Native to South America, chiles were taken by Columbus to the Old World, where they spread like wildfire.

*Photographs by Eduardo Fuss*

Dave DeWitt's magazine *Chile Pepper* is the bible for 55,000 fanatics who can't get enough of a good thing.

Sign of welcome, a *ristra*, or string of ripe peppers, hangs at the front door of many homes in the Southwest.

journey through the sultry world of chile lovers. Advertisements and a section of short news items called "Hot Flashes" reveal a host of chile-inspired goods. The pepper's likeness can be found on dozens of products, from boxer shorts to halter tops, shoes, sneakers, towels and wrapping paper. Items in the shape of chiles include bolo ties, dinner candles, earrings, wind socks, dinnerware and doormats, brass door knockers and handles, and jalapeño drawer pulls (each shaped like a different jalapeño). The variety of food products made with peppers is mind-boggling. Mexican chocolate pepper cookies. Jalapeño jelly. Chile and lime potato chips. Hellish Relish. Habanero lollipops. Hot pepper tequila and vodka. A Hotsicle, chili on a stick. Hell in a Bottle, an applesauce-based hot sauce. Religious Experience Hot Sauce.

Such products are the latest twist in a long and venerated history of eating peppers. Wild chile peppers probably originated in present-day Bolivia and, with birds dispersing the seeds, eventually spread throughout Central and South America. Chiles were a dominant part of early American diets. The archaeological record at Tehuacán, Mexico, southeast of Mexico City, shows that wild peppers were eaten in Mesoamerica at least as far back as 7000 B.C., and were probably domesticated by 2500 B.C. Snappy peppers weren't just eaten, they were revered by Mayan and Aztec societies. Montezuma, the last of the Aztec emperors, drank a daily breakfast brew of chocolate and hot chiles. To the Inca the chile pepper was one of the four brothers of the creation myth, Agar-Uchu, or Brother Chile Pepper. Peppers were added to nearly

every dish, whether corn, potatoes or meat. The Cora Indians of Mexico's west coast hold that Narama, the first man, jumped up on a food-laden banquet table; at that moment his testes turned to pepper pods, and he shook the spice onto the plates of others at the feast. Somewhat taken aback at first, the diners tasted the strange condiment and loved it.

When Columbus dropped anchor in the New World in search of spices, he discovered chiles and made at least two mistakes we still live with. Thinking he was in "India," he called native Americans "Indians." He also named chiles "peppers," thinking they were related to black pepper, *Piper nigrum*, which they are not. Chile pepper plants were aboard when he returned to Europe, however, and within a century they had blazed their way along the trade routes and into cuisine in such far-flung places as India, China and Africa, testament to their universal appeal.

Domesticated chile peppers come in many different shapes, sizes and strengths, though they all belong to the genus *Capsicum*, having adapted to different environments over the past half-millennium. Each local cuisine is a different dialect of the same root language. There are plump and scarlet red cherry hots, black plums and Chinese multicolors, which are rich shades of purple and resemble miniature eggplants. There are small, round, red and very pungent chiltepins, which grow wild in Mexico and the Southwest and are harvested by the millions each year for sale in the U.S. market. One of my favorite chile pods is the mirasol, a daggerlike, brilliantly red pepper that, instead of hanging from the plant, grows straight up. The name means "looking at the sun." Habaneros (the name is a reference to their probable origin near Havana) are green when unripe, and ripen to a bold orange or red.

*Just what is a chile, anyway?*

Chiles are part of the Solanaceae, or nightshade, family, which includes tomatoes, eggplants and potatoes. Slippery when it comes to classification, chiles horticulturally are fruits, though botanists call them berries. The produce industry calls them vegetables, but when dried they are a spice.

The quintessence of the chile pepper, its personality, comes from the stuff that makes it hot, chiefly an alkaloid called capsaicin (cap-SAY-a-sin), an unusually powerful compound found in no other plant. Plop just a single drop of tasteless and odorless capsaicin into 100,000 drops of water and drink, and the heat is still very noticeable. In fact, capsaicin can be detected by humans at one part per million.

Capsaicinoids are produced by glands in the pepper's placenta, which is the top of the partition just below the stem. This is also where the seeds are at-

Tiny habanero, which grows in the Caribbean and Yucatán, packs the most powerful punch of all peppers.

Dino Cervantes runs the family farm in New Mexico, the cradle of chile pepper growing in this country.

Chileheads young and old come out for the sixth annual green chile potluck at Steve Bromberg's home in Albuquerque; Susan Zamora (at left), a veteran pepper roaster herself, helps Bromberg at the grill.

tached. Since the placenta is about 16 times hotter than the meat, a pepper with its placenta, seeds and ribs removed is substantially cooler. This is how many peppers are prepared.

No one really knows what role the heat of capsaicin plays in the evolutionary scheme of things, though there are hypotheses. Ethnobotanists believe the hot stuff is probably to make sure that chiles are not eaten by the wrong kinds of dispersers. Rabbits and other small mammals have digestive systems that destroy wild pepper seeds, and appear not to like chiles. Birds, on the other hand, apparently don't feel the heat of chile peppers, for they feed voraciously on them, then disperse the seeds far and wide through their droppings.

Several studies have focused on how the human body reacts to the heat from peppers. When someone eats, say, a hot enchilada, capsaicin in the peppers irritates cells that are pain receptors in the mouth, and the cells release substance P, a chemical envoy that rushes to the brain to alert it to the pain. Some scientists believe substance P causes the brain to produce natural painkillers called endorphins that block the pain of burning. Some people find hot food more palatable after the first few bites. It is, chileheads say, because of the pain-numbing endorphins.

In 1912 a pharmacologist named Wilbur Scoville came up with a standard for measuring the power of capsaicin. Called the Scoville Organoleptic Test, it was needed to calculate the temperature of peppers used in Heet, a muscle salve. Scoville measured ground chile into a mixture of sugar water and alcohol. Then, a panel of five tasters sipped the mixture and gave it a grade; it took a majority of three to assign a value.

The subjective measurement of tasters has since been replaced with high technology, a computerized method called high-performance liquid chromatography. The pepper scale ranges from zero Scoville units for standard-issue bell peppers to 5,000 or so for jalapeños and a whopping 200,000-300,000 for habaneros. Pure capsaicin is 15 million.

Capsaicin is so powerful that there is even a capsaicin-based product designed to drive away grizzly bears. Counter Assault certainly provides a hiker some comfort, and it's not as farfetched as it sounds. Capsaicin spray is so effective as a weapon that it has replaced tear gas sprays in more than 1,200 police departments and at the FBI. It causes eyes to slam shut and creates a spasm in the respiratory system—an unpleasant experience that lasts a half-hour to 45 minutes.

In this country, the cradle of chile pepper civilization is New Mexico. There, peppers are an indispensable part of many people's lives. Such is the case, for example, with Susan Zamora, a marketing director for a bank in Albuquerque who ate her first jalapeño at age 3.

August finds Zamora, a gourmet cook and self-confessed chilehead, prowling the produce stands for what she calls a *pintado*, or "painted" chile, its orange streaks evidence that it is just beginning to ripen. She returns home with a filled burlap sack—a year's supply—to be roasted. Joined in her backyard by friends who have come to sample her peppers, Zamora fires up the barbecue grill with mesquite or applewood. The chiles are

*Jim Robbins, a Montana-based freelancer, writes for the* New York Times *and other publications; he is at work on a book about the Rocky Mountain West.*

# A genius for corruption.

In the 1950s, $64,000 was an incredibly generous prize for a TV game show, and "The $64,000 Question" became a national phenomenon. Audiences loved watching ordinary people answering questions to win huge sums. "The common man as genius," one writer called it. More quiz shows followed, naturally. Some were so popular that when they were on, crime and movie attendance dropped. Imagine the hurt and anger spreading across a naive America when, some years later, a Congressional investigation showed that fraud and corruption ran rampant in these beloved shows. Many were fixed. Some contestants were coached, or even given the right answers. This documentary looks at the formative years of television, and a good idea gone bad.

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roasted till blistered, then dumped into a pot or bag and smothered with wet dish towels to loosen the skin. Then they're frozen, ready for use throughout the year.

In her kitchen, where a *ristra*—a bouquet of deep-red peppers—hangs, Zamora serves me some green chiles she has just pulled from the freezer and cut up. The mesquite imparts a wonderful smoky flavor. For Christmas, she tells me, the feast at her house will feed 50 people, and will include homemade tortillas, tamales and *carne adovada*, a dish with garlic, pork and red chiles that cooks all night in the oven. "I don't know what it is," she says. "If I don't eat chiles on a regular basis, I get weird." She's not the only one. Zubin Mehta, former music director of the New York Philharmonic, who now lives in Los Angeles, grows hot peppers in his garden. He carries them in a jeweled silver case so that when he goes to a restaurant he can supply the chef with his favorite ingredient.

Thanks to fiery-food devotees like Zamora and Mehta, hot cuisines have captured palates in many parts of the country. Dave DeWitt believes a prime factor in the skyrocketing popularity of chile peppers is the change in immigration patterns. Right now, he says, "we're seeing immigration from Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, Mexico and Central America."

In American melting-pot fashion, the cutting edge of the new culinary culture is blending the different spicy diets. Albuquerque chef W. C. Longacre runs a catering service that serves "New Hong Key" cuisine, his own blend of New Mexican, Hong Kong and Key West cookery. An example: shrimp glazed with sauce made from a mixture of pineapple (Caribbean influence); hot chile (New Mexican influence); and ginger, from Asia. It's cooked on a bamboo skewer and dipped in a sauce made from teriyaki and those three ingredients.

To keep up with the growing demand, New Mexico is churning out chiles as fast as the ground will yield them. There, where hot days and cool nights appear to be optimal for this crop, 39,000 acres were planted with them in 1991, more than double the acreage of a decade ago. Most of the chile-raising farms are owned by Hispanic families who have raised chiles and other crops in the rich soil of the Rio Grande Valley for generations.

Cervantes Enterprises is typical. It is run by 28-year-old Dino Cervantes; his grandfather started the business in the 1920s, and his parents are now semiretired. Bigger than most, the family operation has raised hundreds of acres of chiles since the late '70s and also processes chiles from other growers.

The Cervantes processing factory is in the tiny town of Vado, a wide spot in the road just south of Las Cruces. A statue of a chile pepper sits on a pedestal out front; the pungent smell of peppers hangs in the air. Dino takes me through the company's open-air warehouse. Here, dozens of plastic 55-gallon kegs are filled with pepper mash—a mix of salt, water and ground-up cayenne peppers. After fermenting, the mash will be sent to the makers of Louisiana-style hot sauces to be bottled. There are also barrels of pickled jalapeños and dozens of huge cardboard boxes filled with dried red chiles. Each year the operation processes some 12 million pounds of peppers.

Business is good in New Mexico, but potential problems lie ahead. Chile peppers are picked by hand, so growers rely on a ready supply of inexpensive Mexi-

A traditional stone bowl (called a metate) and a grinding stone (known as a mano) are still used by the Cervantes family in New Mexico for mashing cayenne. Most cooks have replaced these tools with a blender.

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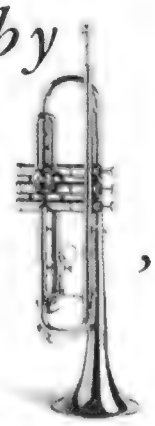

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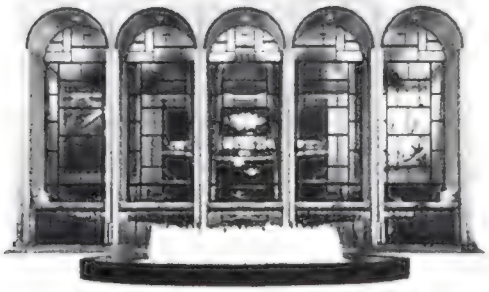

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Cayenne peppers are doused with salt during processing at Cervantes plant; mash will be used in hot sauces.

can farm labor. Looming large is the prospect of a free trade agreement between the United States and Mexico, where labor is much cheaper and the growing season longer. "If we don't go to mechanical harvesting," Cervantes says, "peppers will be grown south of the border."

Developing pepper plants that can be picked by machine is a task that has fallen to Paul Bosland, a professor of horticulture at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. Bosland—or, as the license plate on his pickup truck says, "Chileman"—is one of the country's leading experts on chiles. "Chiles have kept the family farm here alive," says Bosland. "When the price of cotton crashed many growers were able to switch over to chiles."

Genetics are the key to producing a pepper a machine can pick, and NMSU has numerous test plots and greenhouses devoted to different breeding projects. One of the next tasks, Bosland says, is machine pickability for green peppers. "Machine and plant need to be engineered together," he says. "We want to pick the fruit, but leave the plant intact." The only peppers now picked with a machine are certain jalapeños and red peppers. In his test plots, Bosland is working to develop others, such as the piquin, a small undomesticated pepper. It took him about three years to breed a piquin plant with a soft pedicel, the stalk that attaches the berry to the plant. As the picking machine moves down the row of plants and shakes the bushes, the ripe peppers fall off the plant, land on a conveyer and are moved to a storage area in the back of the machine.

Without mechanization, it would be tough for U.S. growers to compete with a place like the Yucatán, where labor is cheap and summer is year-round. There, I visit a habanero grower named Julio Chale Vera—a short, stocky fellow with a toothy grin, wearing baggy shorts, black rubber thongs and a stained baseball hat. Chale Vera oversees a pepper crop for an absentee owner. Together, we walk through a field thick with plants; reaching down to waist level, he bends one back, exposing about 20 glistening green peppers. Three months after the bushes are planted, he explains, a crop is picked. A month later, another crop. A month later, a third. Then for six months the plant rests. In the next three months it produces three crops again. Total harvests from one plant in 14 months: six. By comparison, a New Mexico grower gets two or three crops from a plant before frost claims it.

After our tour we rest at the edge of a field in the ample shade of a *guanacaste* tree and are serenaded by bleating goats and gobbling turkeys. Chale Vera sets fire to some crumpled newspaper and small sticks, and when the fire has burned down he picks some habaneros from a nearby bush and sets them atop the red-hot coals. As they begin to smoke he turns them so they roast on all sides. "This is how most people eat them," he says, offering me a bite. "*Muy picante*," he grins. "I can only eat a little at a time." Lunch for many Mayan field-workers, he says, is a cup of *atole* (a thick beverage made of fermented cornmeal mixed with water) and habaneros, roasted on hot coals just as he has done, then chopped and rolled in a tortilla. The fare is cheap, keeps well in the brutal sun and is nutritious.

*The downside of runaway success*

The creation of new chile plots throughout Central America is having at least one negative effect—the demise of a diverse chile pepper gene pool. In many areas, centuries-old, irreplaceable pepper "land" races—peppers that have adapted to specific localities—are being plowed under and replaced by a monoculture. To add to the problem, seeds in some South and Central American seed banks are being lost due to improper storage. Attempting to stem the loss of pepper genes that may someday prove invaluable, Paul Bosland has started a seed bank at NMSU.

Since habaneros are the hottest of the hot, I feel it my duty while in the Yucatán to test and analyze the effects of these chiles on the human body. My human body. One sultry evening in a restaurant in Mérida, I ask the waiter for a small dish of *salsa de chile habanero*, an uncooked sauce of onions, chopped tomatoes, cilantro, garlic and habaneros. With what looks like a small smirk, he answers "*Si*" and returns with the concoction.

Waiting for my order to arrive, I reflect on the pepper lore I have encountered. There is a Peruvian

pepper called the rocoto that has earned the nicknames *gringo huanuchi*, or "gringo killer," and *levanta muertos*, or "raise the dead." That pepper is not as potent as these habaneros. My order arrives.

I love hot food, but I have never eaten habaneros. I take a small bite. The flavor of the peppers comes through first, and then, a few milliseconds later, the capsaicin roars to my brain with an unmitigated ferocity. They are savage, thermonuclear chiles that threaten to tear the top of my head off. My tongue, the inside of my mouth, the back of my throat and my lips are engulfed in a conflagration. I pant in and out rapidly. No help. I recall—and now understand—a Woody Allen line upon tasting a hot curry. "Too hot," he said. "My teeth are melting." Sweat beads on my forehead and under my eyes. (This phenomenon was actually the subject in 1954 of a scientific paper entitled "Physiological Gustatory Sweating in a Warm Climate." Eating chiles is a form of natural air-conditioning because it causes people to sweat, and evaporation of the moisture cools the skin markedly.) I grope for my glass of water but remember that water won't douse the four-alarm fire. It only spreads it around. Beer doesn't work either. I grab for a pile of napkins to mop up the perspiration. A few other diners turn to look at me, the *gringo en quema*, the burning gringo, with the moist, red face and the pile of used napkins on the table. Time for the antidote. Sugar, dairy products, salt or tortillas. Trying to be nonchalant, I beckon to the waiter, who smirks ever so slightly again. "*Helado, por favor*," I croak, my eyes watering. His return with the ice cream is mercifully quick. I shovel it in. I let it wallow on my tongue and linger against the roof and sides of my mouth and the back of my throat. The fire finally goes out. My brain again operational, I step out of the restaurant to bask in the breeze of a Yucatán spring evening. Funny how it's a lot cooler out now than when I walked in.

Field-workers harvest cayenne pepper crop at the Cervantes farm in New Mexico. Many of the pepper farms there are owned by Hispanic families who have worked the rich Rio Grande soil for generations.

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*By Stanley Meisler*

# Spain's Prado got its start as a storeroom

*When the king and queen redecorated in 1818, those old paintings just didn't go with the wallpaper. And there was this empty building...*

Before housing art, the Prado endured occupation by the French, who stripped its roof to make bullets.

In 1898, in the wake of Spain's humiliating defeat by the United States in war, a terrible fear seized the hearts of Spaniards who knew their Prado Museum well. Reports filtered to Madrid that American art collectors wanted the U.S. Government to give up its demand for the Philippine Islands as war booty and instead take all the Diego Velázquez paintings from the Prado. In the end, imperialism prevailed over art, and the fears were calmed. The United States exacted the Philippines and much other territory as its trophy of victory in the brief Spanish-American War. The Velázquez paintings remained a glory of Spain and a centerpiece of the great Prado collections.

Spanish art historian Alfonso Pérez Sánchez, the former director of the Prado Museum, has never been able to fully document whether these rumors chronicled in the Spanish press of that era had any foundation. It is known that government accountants drew up an inventory of the Prado at that time and tried to evaluate the worth of the paintings. In his writings years later, an American collector, Henry O. Havemeyer, lamented the failure of the U.S. Government to demand the Prado rather than the Philippines. But whether warranted or not, the intensity of the fear of Spaniards almost a century ago and their belief that an insatiable, victorious war power would demand art as indemnity make clear their incredible esteem for the most treasured museum in Spain. "It is obvious now, and it would have been just as obvious then," says Pérez Sánchez, "that giving up Velázquez instead of the Philippines would have been a bad trade." Spaniards could more easily part with an empire than with their Prado.

The Prado has somehow always been at the heart of power and controversy in Spain. The bulk of its collections, after all, was amassed by imperial Spanish kings. During the Spanish Civil War, the government of the Republic hid the paintings to protect them from the bombs of Gen. Francisco Franco and, in a bold and clever stroke of public relations, named Pablo Picasso the wartime director of the museum even though he never set foot in the Prado or even Madrid during the three terrible years of conflict. The museum proudly displays Picasso's *Guernica* in an annex these days but only behind bulletproof glass. Pérez Sánchez defied traditionalists just a few years ago by allowing a foreign specialist to clean the best-known Velázquez painting in Spain. And Prado officials astounded the art world recently by their obvious displeasure over the loan and possible gift to Spain of the sumptuous private art collection of the Baron Hans-Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, whose wife, Carmen Cervera, a former Miss Spain, played an influential hand in the offer.

To a newcomer, the Prado can be mystifying. Unlike the National Gallery of Art in Washington or the National Gallery in London or most museums familiar

Newly restored and cleaned, Velázquez's *Las Meninas* (1656), one of the Prado's masterpieces, packs them in.

*Photographs by Robert Frerck*

Bulletproof glass protects Picasso's *Guernica*, which portrays the horror of bombing a civilian population.

to Americans, the Prado makes no attempt at an orderly and representative tour of the history of Western art. The collections of the Prado come mainly out of the whims and tastes and obsessions of Spanish kings and out of the history of Spain. As a result, the Prado offers a breathtaking panorama of soaring peaks like Velázquez and Francisco Goya and Hieronymus Bosch and El Greco and Titian and Bartolomé Esteban Murillo and José Ribera and Peter Paul Rubens and Sandro Botticelli, with stretches of flatland or desert in between. Since Catholic Spain was the enemy of Protestant Britain for centuries, for example, the Prado has nothing worth showing from Britain.

The unique nature of the Prado demands considerable time from a dedicated visitor. No other museum in the world has the wondrous large canvases of Velázquez, including the most startling of all—*Las Meninas* (*Maids of Honor*), a painting so magnificent that Prado officials could not contemplate for a moment allowing it to travel to New York for the grand Velázquez exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1989. "We could not do that," says Pérez Sánchez. "You cannot come to the Prado and fail to find *Las Meninas*. It would be like coming to Paris and not seeing the Eiffel Tower. *Las Meninas* is a physical part of the Prado."

On top of this, no other museum in the world has the dark and bitter wall paintings of Goya and his enormous historical canvases painted in fury, such as *The 3rd of May, 1808* (*The Shootings*). No other museum in the world has as many Bosch paintings, including his best-known masterpiece, *Garden of Earthly Delights*. And, of course, no other museum in the world has what is probably the most powerful and influential political painting of the 20th century, Picasso's *Guernica*. A visitor missing any of these four experiences would be missing the Prado. And yet, even without the works of these four artists, the Prado would still have enough great paintings to rank as one of the world's most significant museums.

*Confused tourists in a cavernous maze*

Under the dictatorship of Franco, the Prado suffered from neglect and from the isolation of Spain, and nothing was done to keep up with modern museum practices throughout the world. Confused tourists would find themselves in a dark and cavernous maze, unsure where to turn, what to see. No signs or maps marked the way to the spectacular treasures that could be found in the tattered, obscure and airless galleries. Soon after Franco died in 1975, Pérez Sánchez, then deputy director of the museum, delivered a series of lectures on the sorry state of the Prado. "It was the first time anyone had really set down the problems," he says now; "my lectures were a shock." As a foreign corre-

Constant traffic moves through the grand hallway on the Prado's main floor, particularly at lunchtime.

Among the Spanish Baroque artists whose works are on exhibit here are Ribera, Caxés, Carducho and Maino.

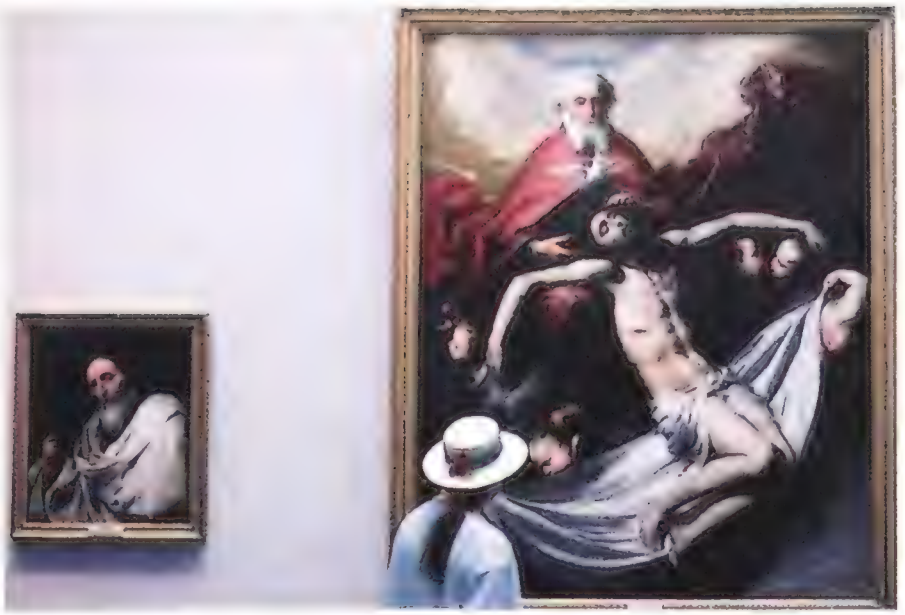
spondent based in Spain in those days, I often found myself eavesdropping so that I could break into the puzzled conversations of Prado visitors to point the way to Velázquez, Goya and, as Bosch is known in Spain, "El Bosco." My boldness would make me feel noble, like some sort of Peace Corps volunteer in the service of the history of art.

Since then, the Prado, swept into the swirl of cultural revival of the new Spanish democracy, has embarked on a long and bold program of modernization: redesigning galleries, reordering displays, restoring darkened and time-worn paintings, increasing the staff and space for restoration, creating a scientific laboratory, expanding the library, brightening the lighting, battling to annex palaces and public buildings nearby, publishing simple guidebooks, eliminating the entrance fee for Spaniards, hunting for lost paintings, and even, for the first time, appointing a press officer.

*Stanley Meisler is the former Madrid correspondent for the* Los Angeles Times. *He last wrote in these pages about Berlin's Pergamon Museum, October 1991.*

The program is neither complete nor wholly successful. The dark murals of Goya, painted on the walls of his home in the last, mad years of his life, have been installed on foolish and insipid burlap. Maps are still no more than a promise. The Prado still badly needs more space. Perplexed tourists, even Spanish tourists, can be found wandering outside the Prado hunting for the Casón del Buen Retiro, the little building that houses Picasso's *Guernica* a couple of blocks away. Yet, though there is enough mystery and inefficiency left to remind a visitor that this museum has deep roots in the sometimes glorious, sometimes dark past of Spain, there is no doubt that the Prado has turned modern during these exciting years of democracy.

The Prado was not founded by one of the great kings of Spain who amassed the royal collections of wondrous art. Instead that honor falls on the least likely monarch of all, the philistine King Ferdinand VII, otherwise noted in Spanish history only for a brutality and mediocrity that ensured the loss of most of the empire in America. The Goya portrait of him in the Prado reveals a fatuous and dandyish ruler.



Visitor studies paintings by José Ribera; *Trinity*, at right, was first work bought specifically for museum.

Altarpiece by 15th-century Spanish painter Nicolás Francés gets attention from restorer Mayte Dávila.

An art student copies Murillo's *Immaculate Virgin of Soult*, taken by the French in 1813, returned in 1941.

According to the account in a contemporary travel guide—written by Richard Ford, the well-known and tireless British observer of Spanish sites and customs—Ferdinand and his queen, María Isabel de Braganza, wanted to decorate their palace with wallpaper and small genre paintings, the latest fad from Paris. But the large, unfashionable paintings by Velázquez, Titian and others got in the way. So in 1818 they packed them up and shipped them to the Prado palace.

The Prado palace itself had been under construction since 1785, when King Carlos III had decided that Spain needed a science museum. During Napoleon's six-year occupation of Spain beginning in 1808, the French used the Prado as a barracks; they left it roofless, having used the lead roof to make bullets. Ferdinand's need to get rid of the royal paintings coincided with a longstanding campaign to create a national art museum in Madrid, and the Prado, though in ruins at the time, seemed the most available site. It opened as a museum of art on November 19, 1819, exhibiting only 311 of its store of 1,510 paintings.

*"Send me a Goya for my hunting lodge"*

This problem of having more paintings than it could show worsened throughout the 19th century as the Prado accumulated more of the royal collections. The museum began the strange and deplorable practice of loaning some of its surplus to provincial museums, government offices, churches, privately owned chapels, episcopal palaces, and even private organizations like the Association of Manufacturers of Sabadell and the Society for the Protection of the Poor. This practice was abused. In 1887, the Prado provided paintings for the episcopal palace in Avila. But the bishop looked on the canvases as a personal gift and took them with him when he was transferred to Vitoria three years later. In 1896, the Prado, according to its records, dispatched paintings to the "Patrons of the Church of Santa Maria of Sotuelamos" in the diocese of Toledo. But no such church existed. The false entry in the records hid the delivery of the paintings to the private hunting lodge of the Minister of Development.

The dispersal of paintings exposed them to great damage. Some were destroyed by fire or, during the Spanish Civil War, by artillery and marauding vandals. Others were allowed to rot by civil servants who failed to grasp their value or importance. For decades, pupils in Badajoz tossed balls against José Ribera paintings that lined the walls of a school patio used as a recreation area on rainy days. The Prado did not rescue the Riberas from Badajoz until 1968.

It was assumed by many Spaniards that the dictator Franco depleted even more of the Prado for the benefit of his cronies and relatives. But the extent of his

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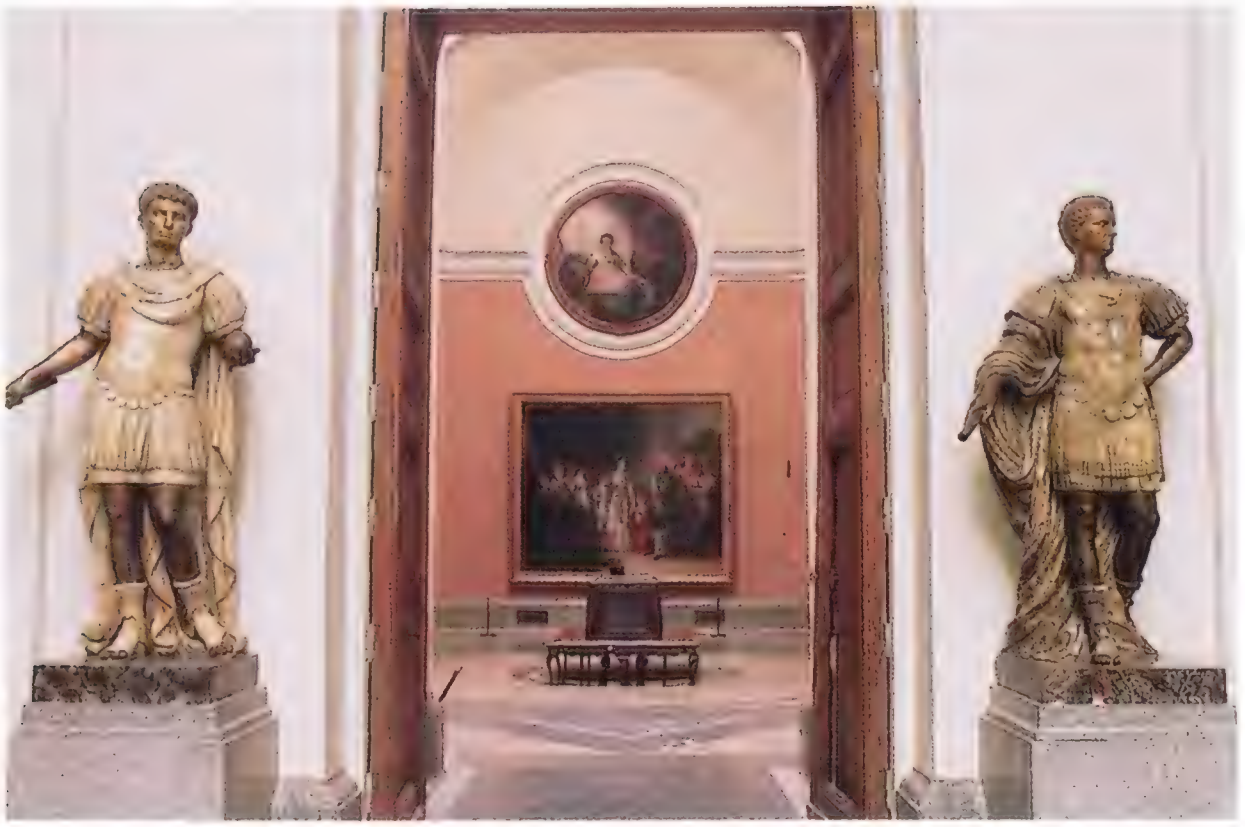

Copies of first-century Roman sculptures guard the entrance to Prado's Goya room. Beyond it is *The Family of Charles IV* (1800). Circular work above is the allegorical *Industry*, also by Goya.

waste of the national treasure has proved exaggerated. Pérez Sánchez completed an accounting of what Spaniards call "the dispersed Prado" in 1990 and reported that the museum held title to some 8,000 paintings but kept fewer than 1,000 on permanent exhibition and nearly 4,000 in its storerooms. Of the rest, 500 paintings were either destroyed or missing and another 2,500 on loan to various public institutions throughout the country. Pérez Sánchez said his statistics "ended many years of uncertainties and absurd rumors about the situation." But, though not up to the level of the wildest exaggerations, his total of 3,000 destroyed, missing and dispersed paintings was woeful enough.

On November 25, 1891, Spaniards reading the newspaper *El Liberal* were astounded and shocked to see the headlines: "Last Night's Catastrophe. Spain in Mourning. Fire in the Painting Museum." The account, by the journalist Mariano de Cavia, related that the Prado had caught fire and was "as good as lost." Workers seemed to have saved only the least valuable canvases, and Spain had "lost one of the few jewels remaining on her crown."

If they had read to the last line, Spaniards would have realized that Cavia's story was a muckraking joke, describing "sad events that might possibly occur when they are least expected." Cavia wanted to warn Spain that employees and their families lived inside the Prado, lighting fires for cooking and candles for illumination, and that the building was strewn with inflammable material. The alarm worked. After the shock of the article, government officials inspected the building, evicted the families and cleared away any hazardous objects.

The gravest threat to the collections of the Prado came during the Spanish Civil War. Soon after the war erupted in July 1936, the staff pried the most important paintings from their frames and stored the treasures in the basement. Sandbags were stacked throughout the rest of the building, especially around sculptures, a futile gesture against bombing. When Franco's planes, including aircraft of Nazi Germany's Condor Legion, dropped bombs on a nearby street in November, the vibrations shattered an Italian Renaissance sculpture. So long as Madrid was vulnerable to fascist bombing, the collections would have to be moved.

Picasso had been appointed absentee director two months earlier, but there is no evidence that he was consulted about the transfer of the Prado. Picasso's real contribution to the doomed Spanish Republic was his painting of *Guernica* for the Spanish pavilion of the Paris World's Fair in 1937. The bombers of the Condor Legion, on Franco's orders, had blasted the hallowed Basque town of Guernica in a systematic attempt to terrorize the entire population of a town through air power. Picasso's furious portrayal of this prelude to World War II became the 20th century's most significant symbol of tyrannical brutality.

In Picasso's absence, the Prado staff transported dozens of works along with what it regarded as the most important paintings (they numbered 353) and the most important drawings (168)—all by Goya—to Valencia for storage in the 14th-century Towers of Serranos and the 16th-century Patriarch Academy. As the war neared its end in 1939, the Republican enclave continued to shrink. The government, having already had to move the artworks again—this time to Catalonia, near the French border—was unsure of any haven within Spain itself. So it transported the masterpieces by train to Geneva, the home of the League of Nations. Art critic John Russell has called this "the most pre-

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cious freight, in terms of our cultural inheritance, that was ever committed to the iron rail." The works were exhibited in Geneva's Museum of Art and History but were returned to Spain and its new government of Francisco Franco after the war ended. Fortunately, they reached the Spanish border hours before the start of World War II.

After Franco died in 1975, the new democratic government worked feverishly to bring Picasso's *Guernica* to Spain. Journalists and politicians often declaimed that the painting must be "returned" to Spain, but that, of course, distorted the facts. The painting had never touched or even crossed Spanish territory. Certain that Franco would destroy it, Picasso had loaned *Guernica* to the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York, where it became a mainstay of the magnificent Picasso collection there for four decades.

### Guernica*'s arrival marked a new era*

The transfer from MOMA to the Prado was troubled and emotional. I remember kidding Rosa María Subirana, the director of the Picasso Museum in Barcelona then, that I had always felt the natural home of *Guernica* was New York. My remark infuriated her. "You have enough Picassos in New York," she snapped at me. In truth, I had only been half-joking with my glib remark. And I had the feeling then that MOMA and a few Spanish intellectuals probably agreed with me.

There were arguments in favor of keeping *Guernica* in New York. Crazed fascists were still loose in Spain in those days. Only a few years earlier, right-wing extremists calling themselves Warriors of Christ the King had rushed into a private gallery in Madrid, hurled acid on an exhibition of Picasso prints, and then cut them up with knives and razor blades. Democracy still seemed fragile. If reactionary army generals took power in a coup, they surely would pounce on *Guernica* and destroy it in fury and hate. On top of this, Picasso had always looked on New York as a congenial home for his art. American collectors had purchased and praised his work decades before Spaniards had taken any notice of it. Many New Yorkers had supported the lost cause of the Spanish Republic and well understood the antiwar and antifascist symbolism of the painting.

But such arguments had a hollow ring in the face of Spain's enormous emotional need for *Guernica*. After the Spanish government formally requested the painting from MOMA, Roland Dumas, now Foreign Minister of France, then Picasso's lawyer, announced that the painter had instructed him in writing to send *Guernica* to the Prado Museum if and when democracy were restored in Spain. In 1981, all parties agreed with Dumas that Spain was a democracy once again, and MOMA airfreighted the painting to Madrid. Officials

Religious works by Peter Paul Rubens are only a portion of museum's extensive holdings of his art.

decided to exhibit *Guernica* in the main gallery of the Casón del Buen Retiro, the nearby annex used to display the Prado's limited collection of 19th-century art.

*Guernica* is protected with bulletproof glass, which keeps spectators about ten feet away from the mural. Yet this annoyance seems minor compared with the quiet but intense feelings experienced by Spaniards who stand before *Guernica*. The gallery is often crowded with students taking notes, businessmen on an office break, tired tourists from all over Spain, mothers guiding their children close to the glass. They spend a good deal of time with the painting. "Picasso," I once heard a guide explain in Spanish, "painted the cruel face, the anguished face of the Civil War in Spain." *Guernica* is still a powerful political statement—a terrifying symbol of opposition to Franco and opposition to war, and thus a symbol of democracy and peace. Spaniards, who live with the history of the Civil War, can feel this best.

Large canvases are, at left, *Martyrdom of Saint Andrew*, painted in 1612; and, at right, *Adoration*, from 1609.

Pérez Sánchez directed the Prado from 1983 to 1991, during its great period of post-Franco modernization. His most controversial artistic decision was his selection in 1984 of English-born John Brealey, at that time chief of conservation of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, to clean *Las Meninas*, the Velázquez masterpiece. Although Brealey is one of the best-known restorers in the world, Spanish specialists felt insulted that a foreigner had been selected. Protests came from the Ministry of Culture's Institute of Conservation and Restoration, the Association of Technical Conservators of Cultural Property, and the University of Madrid's School of Fine Arts. University students and teachers even marched on the Prado. Spaniards insisted that a foreigner who did not know their painting well would overclean it and make it too bright. Brealey understood. "You can consider it very brave or very foolhardy for the Prado to bring in a foreigner," he said. "You cannot imagine the French calling in a foreigner to clean their greatest French painting." Or, he adds, the British or Italians. "It was a terrible slap in the face for the Spanish restorers." But Brealey forged ahead.

Velázquez, the court painter of King Philip IV, completed his most famous work in 1656. The painting has an unusual perspective, for it depicts the infanta Margarita, her maids of honor, two dwarfs and three other court attendants in a room with Velázquez while he paints the portrait of King Philip and Queen Mary Anne. Only a mirrored reflection of the king and queen can be seen, for they are outside the canvas. Anyone looking at the painting is standing just where the king and queen should be standing.

*Velázquez and an uninspired gimmick*

For many years, it had been difficult for visitors to appreciate the full magnificence of *Las Meninas*. The varnish from its last cleaning, in 1871, had become dark and discolored. Moreover, the painting was exhibited in a small, dark room with an uninspired gimmick. The museum staff had placed a mirror on the opposite wall under the old theory that Velázquez must have used a mirror to paint the scene. By looking through the mirror, a visitor could imagine he was seeing the scene just as Velázquez did in the 17th century. This foolishness could persuade an unschooled visitor that Velázquez was some kind of trickster in perspective. "The mirror delighted the public," Brealey said. "But it was a very simple idea. A great artist like Velázquez has to have a much more complex intellect than simply painting what he sees through a mirror."

After five weeks of work, made nerve-racking by the hostility of Madrid, Brealey completed the cleaning. This was followed by some restoration of paint by the regular staff of the Prado. The cleaning and the restoration process did not uncover anything startling, but did turn up touches of color that had been hidden and brought out much of the original color. The whole scene brimmed with a new warmth and intensity. The results muted the critics. Columnist Carlos Seco Serrano, writing in *El Pais*, Spain's most influential newspaper, said, "I have been able to make a reverent and passionate visit to *Las Meninas*, thanks to an impeccable restoration." King Juan Carlos presented Brealey with the Spanish Medal of Fine Arts.

"It's very hard," said Brealey. "First, they want to cut your throat. Then, they want to turn around and kiss you on both cheeks."

The Prado has been bruised in recent years by its encounter with Baron Hans-Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza and his wife, Carmen Cervera. The 71-year-old baron, born in Holland of German and Hungarian parents, owns what is generally regarded as the second-most valuable private collection of paintings in the

Teenagers encounter El Greco: above, *Christ carrying the Cross*; *Annunciation*; *Coronation of the Virgin.*

world (SMITHSONIAN, November 1979), superseded only by the holdings of Queen Elizabeth II of England. For decades, the baron and his father exhibited the paintings in the Villa Favorita on Lake Lugano in Switzerland. But the baron decided a few years back that he needed more space for his collections. When the Swiss government refused to finance the expansion of the Villa Favorita, he started to look elsewhere. Many countries sought the world-renowned collection, an extraordinary prize. But Spain, where the baron and his wife, known as Heini and Tita, have long been mainstays of the international jet set, seemed to have the advantage.

Pérez Sánchez, the Prado director during the controversy, clearly did not find Heini and Tita congenial company. He infuriated the baron a few years ago by refusing to loan any of the Prado paintings to a Goya exhibition at the Villa Favorita. But, more important, Pérez Sánchez quickly saw talk of the gift or loan of the Thyssen-Bornemisza paintings as a threat to the Prado. There was only one possible site for the collection—the Villahermosa palace across the Plaza de Cánovas del Castillo from the Prado. To put it there, however, the government would have to renege on its promise to turn the palace over to the Prado to display its Goya collections and house its conservation teams. But it was soon clear that the government would have no compunction about reneging. "There are historic opportunities that must be seized," said the Minister of Culture. Pérez Sánchez was rueful about the loss. "For the Spanish public," he said, "access to the Thyssen collection is an event of considerable importance, and we must rejoice in that. But it is a serious setback for us. The presentation of our collections will be mutilated for several years."

*An offer they couldn't refuse*

Some Prado curators were less polite than Pérez Sánchez and dismissed the importance of the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection. "Everybody is falling all over themselves to exhibit a couple of José Ribera paintings that the baron is bringing to us," said one curator, "even though we have 30 Riberas hidden in the Prado basement for lack of space." The remark was a bit unfair. It is true that the Old Masters collected by the baron and his father over the years, wonderful as they are, are no match for the Prado's. But Thyssen-Bornemisza was also offering Spain a host of more modern painters, such as Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh, Edouard Manet, Edgar Degas, Paul Gauguin and Claude Monet, whose works barely exist in Spain. The baron's offer would even strengthen the Spanish holdings of Picasso, who was much honored in Spain in the past 15 years but hardly bought by Spanish private collectors for most of the century.

But the baron did not give the paintings to Spain outright. He signed an agreement with the Spanish government in 1988 to lend nearly 800 of his paintings to Spain for only ten years. The government promised to renovate the Villahermosa palace to exhibit most of them and subsidize a new foundation to care for them. The baron hinted that he might decide to leave the collection in Spain permanently after the ten years were up, but there was no guarantee of that in the agreement. Tita predicted there was an 80 percent chance of the paintings remaining in Spain forever but added, somewhat cryptically, "everything depends on the fulfillment of all the clauses in the agreement."

The first news accounts reported that the paintings would be turned over to the Prado, but Pérez Sánchez insisted that was never true. In any case, the Prado will have nothing to do with the project now. "The issue of the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection is closed," Pérez Sánchez told me. "The collection has nothing to do with the Prado. It will be run by a private foundation."

The Prado is not likely to remain short of space very long. Though nothing has been signed, government

officials have already promised the Prado the nearby Museum of the Army, once part of a royal palace, as a substitute for the Villahermosa palace. There is also talk of the Prado taking over the Vistahermosa palace a few blocks away. Once owned by the dukes of Alba, this building now is headquarters for the army general staff. Felipe Vicente Garín Llombart, the new director of the Prado, says the nearby Ministry of Agriculture building is another possible site for expansion.

In 1991, Spaniards were shocked to find the Prado suddenly without a director, a result of the Gulf War. The war had aroused great controversy in Spain. Support for American policy was weaker there than in any other major Western European country. In February, Pérez Sánchez signed a declaration by Spanish intellectuals opposing the government's decision to send a Spanish ship to support the combined forces in the Persian Gulf. This petition infuriated the Minister of Culture, who dismissed Pérez Sánchez and other ranking officials of the ministry who had signed the petition.

In April, Garín was appointed to the position. The director of the Fine Arts Museum of San Pio V in Valencia, Garín was a surprise choice; but the selection was widely hailed in the Spanish press. At his inauguration, he paid tribute to Pérez Sánchez and promised no revolutionary changes in the direction of the Prado.

The change of directors as a result of the Gulf War illustrated once more how often this great museum has found itself somehow embroiled in politics and controversy. That is not surprising. After all, the democratic governments of Spain, in lavishing care, attention and funding on the Prado in the past 15 years, have been motivated in part by a defiance of the Franco dictatorship's neglect. The art treasures of Spain reflect the history of Spain, and Spaniards refuse to look on the building that houses them as just a museum.

Goya's *The 3rd of May, 1808* (also known as *The Shootings*), like *Guernica*, is a powerful statement about the injustices of war. Frequently reproduced, these masterpieces are best experienced face-to-face.

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*By Israel Shenker*

# Bess of Hardwick was a woman to be reckoned with

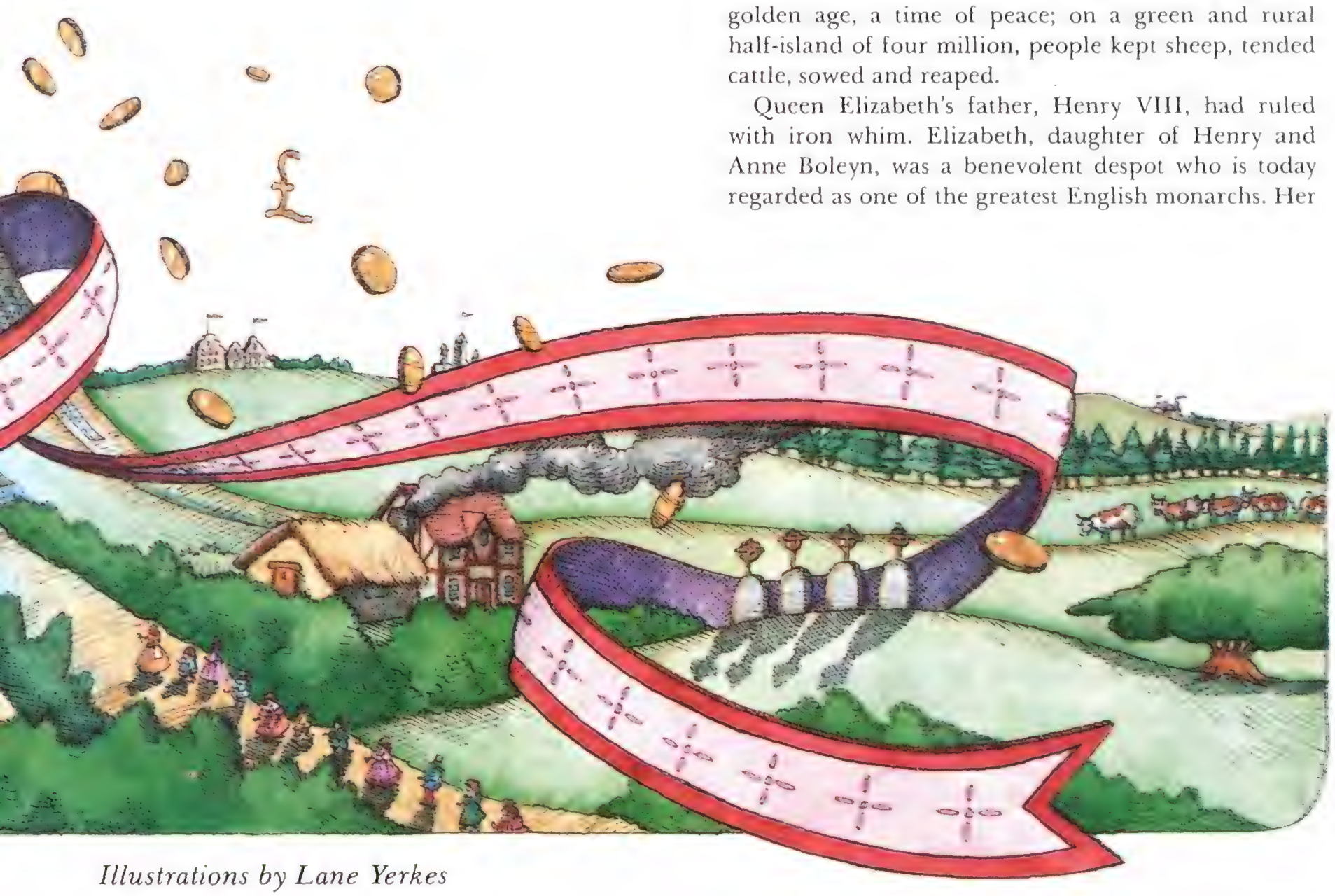
*Like Monopoly, the game in Elizabethan days was to acquire land and build; the dice were in her favor—but she also knew how to play*

Now that four centuries have passed, perhaps we can fully appreciate Bess of Hardwick, an awesome figure, ambitious and strategic in every aspect of her life. Outliving four husbands, she grew richer from each, amassing vast expanses of the English countryside and presiding over property and progeny with firm hand and ready tongue.

Bess has been called by her detractors a "termagant Countess," "an incorrigible intriguer with the tongue of an adder," "overbearing, selfish, proud, treacherous and unfeeling." In other words, not the model "lady" of her times. She loved grandeur, luxury and beauty. "A woman of masculine understanding and conduct, proud, furious, selfish and unfeeling," maintained a venerable history. "She was a builder, a buyer and seller of estates, a moneylender, a farmer and a merchant of lead, coals and timber; when disengaged from these employments, she intrigued alternately with [Queen] Elizabeth and Mary [Queen of Scots], always to the prejudice and terror of her husband." This woman sounds anything but boring. And the question does arise: If she caused men so much trouble, why did they keep marrying her?

In her later years, she had a powerful role model, to be sure, in Queen Elizabeth. Bess of Hardwick and Bess of England—flamboyant redheads both—were vigilant about their status and station and privileges, their right to rule and be obeyed. This was England's golden age, a time of peace; on a green and rural half-island of four million, people kept sheep, tended cattle, sowed and reaped.

Queen Elizabeth's father, Henry VIII, had ruled with iron whim. Elizabeth, daughter of Henry and Anne Boleyn, was a benevolent despot who is today regarded as one of the greatest English monarchs. Her



*Illustrations by Lane Yerkes*

From her confinement in the Tower, Bess completed negotiations for the marriage of her oldest daughter.

style of wielding power was characterized by charm—and the tendency to dissemble and procrastinate. This is how she handled the issue of matrimony. That a woman should rule was exceptional, and of course her duty would be to marry and have a man to guide her, to rule the kingdom and to produce a male heir. Her father had rid himself of more than one wife who failed to produce a son; female children were adornments but not the stuff of kinghood. But Queen Elizabeth saw things differently. For her, matrimonial prospects served diplomacy—her ability to make alliances and frustrate enemies, and to encourage loyalty and pacify Parliament. Courted and flattered, she remained the Virgin Queen, relishing independence too much to share sovereignty with a husband.

During the brief reign of her half-sister Mary, Elizabeth was suspected of designs on the throne and imprisoned in the Tower of London. As queen, she too used the Tower for those who plotted and conspired or in some other way posed a threat. One of those was Bess of Hardwick herself, twice sent to the Tower, twice returned to Her Majesty's favor. Like the queen, Bess regarded matrimony as a way to advance her aims; but while Elizabeth profited by resisting, Bess profited by mastering the game. The turbulent currents of life and death brought opportunities to increase her wealth and distinction, and she converted every opportunity to advantage, every husband to coin of the realm. As author Vita Sackville-West put it, Bess "bullied and survived them all."

Horace Walpole, author and son of a Prime Minister, commemorated Bess' enterprise with these lines:

> Four times the nuptial bed she warm'd,
> And ev'ry time so well perform'd,
> That when death spoiled each husband's billing,
> He left the widow every shilling. . . .

As the late 16th century unfolded, England took an increasingly large role on the European stage in politics, culture and the arts. Quite naturally, on the home front, it was also a time when pounds, shillings and pence—as well as social position—were made visible in wood, stone and mortar. And so for Bess, in flourishing maturity and stalwart age, one obsession ruled: a passion for building. Repeatedly she drew up plans, collected workmen and launched a great new dwelling place. Chivying craftsmen to greater effort, subjecting each account to probing scrutiny, she saw her dreams take solid form in the grandeur that was home—time and again. Today, ivy and moss curtain the remnant stone, and the magnificent ruins of her labors litter the English countryside.

One masterpiece, however, has endured. In rural Derbyshire stands perhaps the greatest architectural survivor of the Elizabethan Age, a splendid structure

popularly summarized as "Hardwick Hall—more glass than wall." It still houses tapestries, portraits and lavish furnishings that Bess inventoried in 1601. She ruled this glorious roost like a queen, with family, friends and attendants forming the image of a royal court.

In England, Bess of Hardwick and her last great monument have become legend. No other house in that country, writes historian Mark Girouard, is "so closely connected in popular imagination with one person." Nigel Nicolson called Hardwick Hall "one of the most beautiful buildings ever created," describing the exterior as "splendidly arrogant and adventurous," the interior as "cool and sedate as a convent." Sacheverell Sitwell thought Hardwick's High Great Chamber the most beautiful room in all Europe.

Bess began humbly enough, in about 1527, in a large farmhouse just a hundred yards from Hardwick Hall. Sent to seek her fortune in the household of a distant relative, she helped nurse young Robert Barlow. Child marriages were not unknown, and Robert, about 13, married Bess, about 15. When he died soon thereafter, she acquired a modest settlement, precocious widowhood and an eye for the main chance.

Her eye fell on William Cavendish. As a commissioner for Henry VIII, Cavendish had confiscated convents and monasteries. Not the last to profit, he had received extensive church property and been appointed Treasurer of the King's Chamber. Sir William drew a fortune from rent, still more from annuities, and increased the bounty by selling favors—a common practice in an age of widespread corruption.

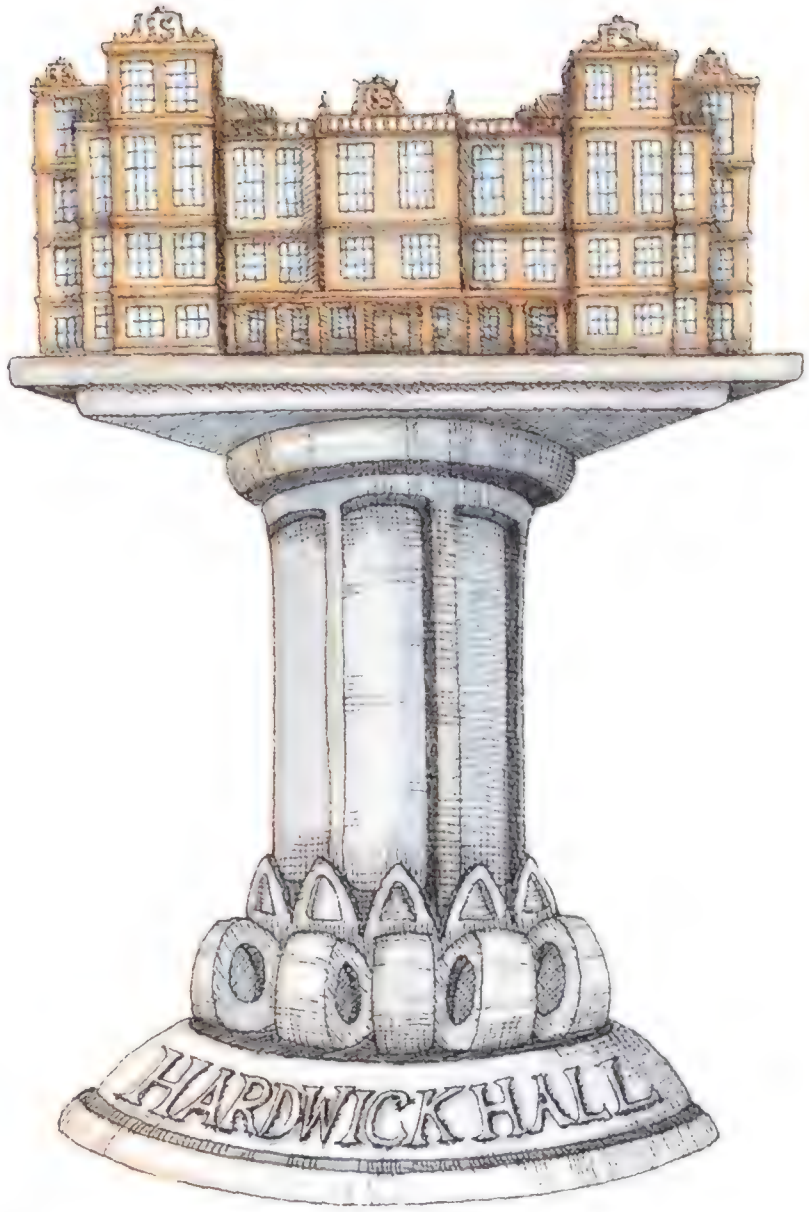
Sir William was more than eligible; he found Bess more than eligible, too. They were married in 1547, when she was about 20. In his two earlier marriages he had fathered eight children, of whom three daughters survived; Bess gave birth to eight children, of whom six survived. Ensconced in gratifying splendor, she had fine silver and linen, 15 servants in blue livery, and at meals a harpist and two minstrels. In harmony—the property was registered in joint names—the Cavendishes did real estate deals, their negotiations smoothed by gifts of game and fish to government assessors. Among acquisitions was the estate of Chatsworth, including the old manor, and there the happy couple began building on a grand scale.

But suddenly a discrepancy was noted in government accounts. Sir William was charged with a shortage of £5,237, an enormous sum in Elizabethan days. He sought to defend himself: an underling had absconded with £1,231 in the "tyme of my sickness," previous sovereigns had promised money they'd never paid, and he'd spent a fortune raising soldiers for the defense of the monarchy. Pleading for mercy, he described his "poor wife" and "miserable and innocent children . . . kneeling and standing before me (not without sorrowful tears) presenting our misery."

But before the matter could be settled, Sir William died, leaving Bess with six of her own children, two stepdaughters (one had died) and her husband's debt to the Crown. Together they had undertaken the lifelong task of assuring a place in history for the Cavendish line. And now she was left to carry on alone.

Fortunately, when Elizabeth took the throne in 1559 she appointed Bess a lady-in-waiting. What Bess was waiting for was a third husband, and he was ready. Sir William St. Loe—a landowner with comfortable income, a favored courtier, himself twice married—was more than happy to join his fortunes and land to Bess'. In letters he addressed her as "My own good servant and chief overseer" and "My honest, sweet Chatsworth."

Beyond these qualities, Bess was also prepared to act as discreet confidante. She lent a ready ear when Catherine Grey, who was of royal blood, confessed



The masterpiece of her building efforts is Hardwick Hall, which alone among her projects still stands.

*The author, a frequent contributor, last wrote in these pages about H. W. Fowler (November 1990).*

Bess and her prisoner, Mary, Queen of Scots, spent hours together designing and stitching embroideries.

that she had secretly married without asking the queen's permission. Elizabeth thought that she should have been informed and sent Bess to the Tower. There the Lady St. Loe was held 31 weeks in durance not exactly vile: she had a servant and spent lavishly for food.

Not even imprisonment frustrated Bess' dynastic designs. Just before her confinement, she had begun to arrange the marriage of her eldest daughter, 13, to a 15-year-old. She finished these negotiations from the Tower, then persuaded her husband to offer a dowry sufficient to buy a marriage for one of her stepdaughters. What was more, Queen Elizabeth agreed to reduce Bess' debt from £5,000 to £1,000, which St. Loe paid. Then (it seemed the fate of dutiful husbands) Sir William died.

Rich and eligible, Bess knew where *her* duty lay. She left Chatsworth and returned to court to try her luck again. There she found the excessively prosperous George Talbot, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury. He had a long, sorrowful face, a pointed beard and no excess of intelligence—his fortune had come through the family and from rewards for his extreme loyalty to Elizabeth. Though only four years younger than the earl, the queen called him her "old man." A widower with seven children, Shrewsbury was Lord Lieutenant of Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and Chamberlain of the Receipt of the Exchequer. He had eight main houses—Sheffield Castle, Sheffield Manor, Rufford Abbey, South Wingfield Manor, Welbeck Abbey, Buxton Hall, Worksop Manor and Tutbury Castle (leased from the queen)—plus two more in London, one in nearby Chelsea, and a few lesser manors. Bess had at least four houses of her own, and her Derbyshire property adjoined some of his. This was a marriage made in heaven and cemented on earth. "I have been glad to see my Lady Saintlo, but now more desirous to see my Lady Shrewsbury," said the queen. "There is no Lady in this land that I better love and like."

In 1567 Bess became Countess of Shrewsbury, having artfully negotiated with the earl an agreement that would keep lands within the family: two of her children were to marry two of his. But cold arrangements did not impair their love. Shrewsbury to Bess: "As the pen writes so the heart thinks that of all earthly joys, that hath happened unto me I thank God chiefest for you: for with you I have all joy & contentation of mind & without you death is more pleasant to me than life if I thought I should be long from you."

Then, with the arrival of an unwelcome houseguest in 1569, joy went out the window. Mary, Queen of Scots and, as a cousin of Elizabeth's, a claimant to the English throne, had fled Scotland and sought refuge in England. Needing a loyal jailer for her royal prize, Elizabeth picked ever faithful Shrewsbury to receive Mary at Tutbury Castle. Bess wished she'd had more notice: "I have caused workmen to make forthwith in readiness all such things as is most needful to be done before her coming and God willing I shall cause forthwith three or four lodgings to be furnished with hangings and other necessaries. . . ."

*The prisoner was hard to please*

Required to provide endless wood, coal and hay for Mary's retinue, Shrewsbury complained that people at Tutbury were "marvelously molested." Mary, not content with a score of servants, including three cooks, a baker, a pastrymaker, two pantrymen, three lackeys, an embroiderer and a priest, wrote that she was living in an old hunting lodge "in a walled enclosure . . . exposed to all the winds and inclemencies of heaven . . . built of timber and plaster, cracked in all parts . . . so damp [on one side] that you cannot put any piece of furniture in that part . . . without its being in four days completely covered with mould." As hundreds of hangers-on gathered, Shrewsbury pleaded with Queen Elizabeth to increase the allowance for the care of Mary. "The Queen of Scots coming to my charge will make me soon greyheaded," he complained. But the Queen of England was herself short of the ready, and the prospect of a grayhaired courtier was not alarming.

To isolate Mary from conspirators, the queen issued severe orders to define her imprisonment. Even Bess was to see Mary "very rarely"—only if the Queen of Scots was ill or wished to speak with her. No other gentlewoman was to be admitted. But Bess and Mary shared a love of embroidery and spent long hours together. Mary gave Bess gifts of jewelry.

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When reports circulated that Bess was overfriendly, the Shrewsburys protested that they were loyally discharging their responsibilities. There being no shortage of Shrewsbury homes in which to assure the prisoner's security, Mary was moved 46 times during her 16-year stay. She received her own royal pension, but much of it went to plots and intrigue that sought to arrange rescue, revolt or marriage—or all three. Letters were intercepted and deciphered. One of her fiancés, the Duke of Norfolk, implicated in a plot against Queen Elizabeth, was executed in 1572. Shrewsbury presided over the trial and succeeded Norfolk as Earl Marshal.

At this point, Bess pulled out all the stops. In 1574 she secretly arranged for her daughter, Elizabeth Cavendish, to marry Charles Stuart. This was a very tricky maneuver because Charles, a half-cousin and brother-in-law of Mary, Queen of Scots, was also a cousin of Queen Elizabeth's. "From Bess' point of view the marriage was a triumph," writes historian David Durant in his biography *Bess of Hardwick*. "Her daughter Elizabeth was now married into kinship with the Queen of England, and her grandson, should there be one, could rule over England and Scotland."

Yet again Elizabeth had been kept in the dark. According to some accounts, Bess was sent to the Tower; at the very least, the queen was greatly displeased with her. Shrewsbury, too, was angered because Bess' actions jeopardized his relationship to the queen. This created a rift between Bess and her husband that would continue to grow.

Husband No. 3, George Talbot: no excess of intelligence but he brought eight major properties to join to hers.

*Marriage arrangements were serious business*

Arabella Stuart, only child of the marriage Bess had arranged, was born in 1575. As a potential claimant to the crown (she was third in the line of succession), she seems to have enjoyed royal favor for a few years. Bess became her guardian by the death of the child's parents. When Arabella was 8, Bess, inveterate matchmaker as well as match, arranged for her to be engaged to Lord Denbigh, age 4, son of the Earl of Leicester. But the prospective groom died before he was 5. With time, Arabella sought to escape from her grandmother's control. There was talk of marriage to France's Henry IV—and he was willing, provided Arabella was declared presumptive heir of Queen Elizabeth. But England's monarch was in no hurry to pronounce on the succession and showed her displeasure with Arabella, who never was bestowed the throne.

In the meantime, Bess continued building activities. She bought old Hardwick (the farmhouse in which she had been born) in 1583. She also engaged workmen for her husband's construction project at Worksop of a great house worthy of receiving England's queen, her erstwhile jailer. It was to be the grandest mansion in the Midlands, to include a gallery 224 feet long. As Bess—who spoke of her building enterprises as her "workes"—bought more and more land, Shrewsbury complained that she was driving him bankrupt. "The old song," he called her demands for money, and the marriage degenerated into open dissonance.

Shrewsbury wrote two of his sons who were returning from abroad "to be stout with the Countess." They didn't see Bess, but they were given a letter by the Earl of Leicester telling Shrewsbury to make up with Bess, for "she ys your wife and a verrye wyse gentlewoman." Shrewsbury complained that she called him "knave, foole and beast," mocking him with words and gestures

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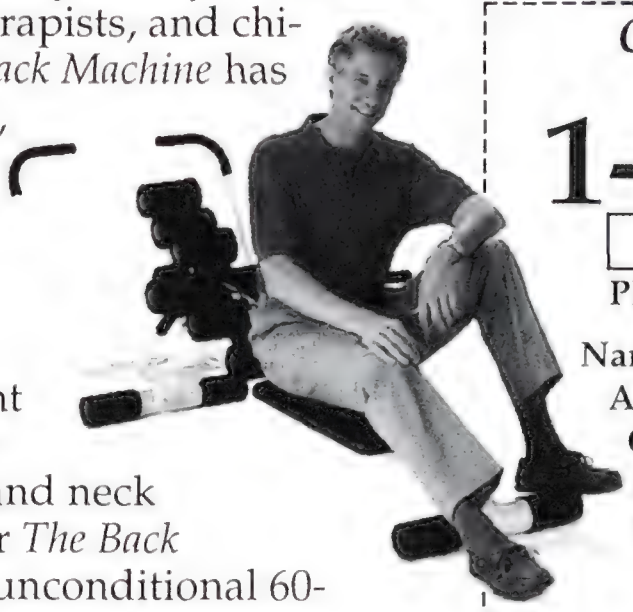

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Legend had it that Bess wouldn't die so long as she was building, but she threw in the trowel in 1608.

"from a heart replenished with deadly malice and hatred." He cut off her allowance, seized her revenues and turned up at Chatsworth with 40 mounted men. But he was refused admittance by Bess' son, William Cavendish, "with halberd in hand and pistol under his girdle."

Shrewsbury inveighed against this "insolent behaviour," and complained to the queen that Bess "deserveth no longer to have any part in my liberality. It were no reason that my wife and her servants should rule me and make me the wife and her husband." But the queen saw nothing wrong. To his brother-in-law, Shrewsbury wrote: "I try all I can to be rid of this troublesome burden." "How I have deserved your indignation," she wrote to him, "is invisible to me."

In 1584, Queen Elizabeth agreed to a commission of enquiry—the Lord Chancellor and two Chief Justices. Shrewsbury testified that Bess pestered him for money whenever he was ill and spent lavishly on land. Bess said little. The commission ordered Shrewsbury to take Bess back and refund rents he had seized. Shrewsbury said he would abide by the decision, then ignored every provision. He wrote Bess that he wanted a confession in writing "that you have offended me . . . and upon your knees (without either if or and)."

Then Queen Elizabeth ordered a reconciliation, but Shrewsbury merely went through the motions. Things got nasty—arguments ensued about the hangings, silver and furnishings Bess had taken to Hardwick. Bess claimed that she did not even have enough fuel for a decent fire. Meanwhile, Shrewsbury consoled himself with a lady of his household.

Rumors had spread earlier that Mary, Queen of Scots was consoling *herself* with Shrewsbury, even had had his child, perhaps even two children. Not true, said Shrewsbury, and he blamed Bess for the rumors. When the Scottish queen was found guilty of high treason in 1587, it was Shrewsbury as Earl Marshal who gave the signal to the executioner.

When Shrewsbury died, in 1590, there was a mammoth funeral, and then Bess could—with little contest—enjoy what came to her: Bolsover Castle with its coal pits, Wingfield Manor and its ironworks, land in Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire, glassworks, smithies, pastures and timber. By fits and starts she had added to old Hardwick. Most of the materials came from her own property—lead and timber and sandstone, even alabaster and marble.

But what Bess really wanted was a new Hardwick. Late in 1590, when she was in her 60s, 20 workmen started on foundations and cellars 100 yards from the old building, which was to be reserved for the overflow of guests and servants. An astute mistress of the "workes," Bess noted, for example, that "because the walls rise and be not well nor all of one color, they must be whitened at the plasterers' charge." In Bess' accounts, 375 people who worked on the building are listed. Even after Hardwick Hall was finished, Bess acquired new holdings: desperate for money, the queen, for £12,750, sold vicarages and parsonages to her.

*Urging on workers at the site*

In 1607, two of Bess' children came to Hardwick to be reconciled with her. They were well received and reported that they found "a lady of great years, of great wealth, of great wit, which yet still remains." By this time, Bess' building activities had already become the stuff of legend, which widely celebrated her resourcefulness. In one account, learning that her workmen couldn't make mortar at one of the sites—the water froze—she defied the cold and hurried to the building site. Bess urged the men on: Could they not heat ale to use instead of water? It was no use, construction had to wait; and Bess, at 80, was slowing down. There was a legend that Bess would not die so long as she was building, and now her days were plainly numbered. She succumbed on February 13, 1608, and, embalmed, lay in state for three months before entombment in a church in Derby.

Less squeamish than Elizabeth about her legacy, Bess left a detailed will. Elizabeth's death, without benefit of will, brought increased favor to Bess' family, and James I (James VI of Scotland) ennobled Bess' son William. But Arabella's secret marriage to another possible claimant to the throne led to her imprisonment and death in the Tower.

After their mother's death, William and Charles

Cavendish surveyed their estates and concluded that each had 100,000 acres. Bess' descendants were illustrious—and some inherited the building gene. William's progeny became dukes of Devonshire, their family seat a new, even grander Chatsworth. From others descended the dukes of Newcastle, of Portland, of Kingston, of Norfolk; the earls Manvers, the earls of Pembroke, of Kent and of Arundel. Even from the son Bess called "Bad Henry" came the lords Waterpark. (Henry had no children from his marriage, but beyond the bounds of matrimony he was remembered as "the common bull of Derbyshire and Staffordshire.") An old poem memorialized a few of the houses:

> Hardwick for hugeness, Worksop for height,
> Welbeck for use, and Bolser for sight. . . .
> Worksop is wise, Welbeck is witty,
> Hardwick is hard, Bolser is pretty,
> Hardwick is rich, Welbeck is fine,
> Worksop is stately, Bolser divine.

Scaffolding has been erected to preserve the ruins of Old Hardwick, where Thomas Hobbes, the illustrious philosopher, died; his ghost is believed to haunt a path beside the old hall. As part payment for death duties after World War II, "new" Hardwick went to the Treasury, which gave it to the National Trust. In an interior shrouded from damage by sunlight, a gallery 162 feet long and 26 feet high displays portraits of the age's monarchs as well as of Bess' last three husbands. The house boasts four portraits of Bess herself, stately and commanding.

It is not hard to imagine Bess as a living presence, seated at her embroidery, poring over accounts, eating in solitary splendor, receiving guests from the court, contentedly contemplating the view of Old Hardwick. She could recall that her life had begun in that great home when it was a simple farmhouse, and that—bending each occasion to her sovereign will—she had risen from obscurity to royal favor, the benefactor of a great and noble line.

Bess was the Elizabethan equivalent of a modern-day accountant, contractor, politician—and wife and mother—all in one. Leaving 200,000 acres and splendid homes, she set up the family for generations to come. Not bad for a farmer's daughter.

# Sure is quiet in here.

And roomy. And comfortable. And if that isn't impressive enough, consider the new, bigger engine,

©1990 American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

anti-lock brakes and driver's side airbag. Now doesn't that sound nice? The Accord EX. HONDA

*By Jack Fincher*

# All you have to do is tell them what you want

*They'll retrieve, open a drawer or even move you. Canine companions are trained to help disabled people enjoy more independent lives*

Look at her. She's *so* anxious to please. And why not? It cost Canine Companions for Independence (CCI), a California-based organization that trains dogs to assist people with disabilities, more than $10,000 to get Filly ready for this. But as I nervously take my place in the wheelchair that has been assigned to me, I can sense that she's already losing interest.

"Sit up straight!" shouts instructor Laura Pintane. She is not reprimanding Filly. She is talking to me. "It's important that you project an air of authority. Filly has been taught to do what she needs to do, but before she will do it she must know that she's working for *you*."

My assignment, Pintane goes on, is to get and keep Filly's attention. "Generally we don't believe in giving treats as incentives or rewards, otherwise you wind up with a dog that won't work without them. Praise or a spoken correction should be all that's required. Because people confined to wheelchairs usually are restricted in movement, we prefer to command by voice alone, if possible. Now go ahead. Talk to her."

"Filly?" I say. She ignores me and glances up at Pintane. Not hearing any orders, Filly gazes serenely across this shopping mall in the city of Santa Rosa to where five other novices are working with their newly assigned dogs. For the past two weeks CCI instructors have bombarded these recruits with demonstrations, practice sessions, lectures and follow-up quizzes on everything about canines from health and history to psychology and the theory of learning. The stakes are far higher for them than they are for me. I'm just a journalist without any disabilities, trying to experience what they and their dogs must go through. Three of them are confined to wheelchairs. The fourth, although erect and able to walk, has had his diseased joints surgically fused. The fifth is hearing impaired.

"Don't *ask* for Filly's attention," Pintane lectures me. "*Demand* it. Try again."

I do. Filly looks up at me, then away. Ah, progress.

"This time tell her to 'heel,'" Pintane says, "then push off as you speak."

Together we lurch into motion, Filly smoothly in step by my side—at first. All too soon, she is forging to the front, where she cannot be aware of my movements, and Pintane is again dissatisfied.

"Bring her in," she urges. "Let her know who's boss."

I am afraid Filly already knows.

For the next couple of hours we "heel," "stay" and "wait." I say "Lie down," and Filly lies down. I say "Retrieve," and she brings me several small objects from the floor. I say "Pull," and she tugs the wheelchair along at a brisk clip. I feel a warm glow of accomplishment as Filly begins to respond to my commands more and more quickly. As that sense of confidence seeps into the tone of my voice, I can see that Pintane is right: an emotional bond has already begun to form between Filly and me. We're starting to feel comfortable with each other.

Then comes the terrible moment of truth known as the Transaction. I steer Filly and the wheelchair into a candy shop. There, in tandem, we slowly navigate the narrow aisles, taking care to avoid the merchandise-filled shelves that loom like treacherous canyon walls. Having rehearsed me, Pintane perversely waits by the door for me to bring her a bag of jellybeans. Finding a stack of them, I stop.

"Filly, look," I say. When I see her look, after some hesitation, right at the packages, I say "Get it." Filly gently takes one in her jaws. "Hold" I say, wheeling to the checkout as she carries it. "Up." Filly stands up with her forefeet on the counter. "Give." She gives the item to the smiling clerk, who rings it up and gives it back.

Are we on a roll, or what?

"Down." Filly gets down and stands beside me, her teeth delicately holding the bag of jellybeans by its edge. Then for some reason her mouth opens and—*splat*—the bag drops to the floor.

With a sinking feeling I repeat the required commands, and my spirits soar when Filly promptly obeys. "In lap," I say. She jumps up, deposits the bag of jellybeans on my chest and accepts a heartfelt hug.

In training exercise, retriever named Ossenbeck gives occupant of a wheelchair his undivided attention.

*Photographs by Liane Enkelis*

Then she gives the clerk my credit card to complete the transaction. Together, man and dog pass the test.

I'm exhausted. As we pause to rest, we are approached by a couple and their two toddlers. Having been prepared for something like this by Pintane, I go into my spiel. "Please don't pet Filly without asking me first," I tell them, managing a grin but feeling foolish for forbidding such a friendly act. "She's a working dog, not a pet." Only afterward do I learn how important it is, at the beginning of a relationship, that the master of such a dog make sure that he or she is the only channel for all of its pleasures and, indeed, for everything in its life. "I know that sounds too controlling, but believe me, this can be dangerous work," says Bonita Bergin, the determined schoolteacher who 16 years ago founded CCI.

Dogs have been used to guide blind people for years; using them to assist people with other disabilities is a relatively new idea. CCI is one of a few dozen nonprofit organizations that, over the past 15 years or so, have placed more than 800 "service" dogs with physically disabled people all across the country, and 2,500 "hearing" dogs with people who are hearing impaired. "You've seen how little function and movement some of our candidates have," Bergin adds. "Can you imagine one of them stopping his wheelchair if he's leashed to his dog and doesn't have it under complete control? It could dash into traffic after a cat. Lives depend on those dogs."

That's true in more ways than one. Two years ago Vicki White was driving her van through a rough neighborood in Marin, California, when she was held up by three muggers. She was alone and physically helpless—except for her muscular black Labrador, Nomad. Canine companions are not taught to attack or defend but rather, on the command "Guard," to bark in alarm. This time, however, White's anxiety must have communicated itself to Nomad. Given the command "Guard," he spontaneously assumed what his master now calls his menacing, "vulture" posture. "Whoa, lady, be cool," one of the muggers muttered as they melted back into the darkness. Another time Nomad pulled White from a rainswept street in Oakland after her electric wheelchair shorted out. "Both times," she says, "I believe he saved me from serious injury, if not worse. I knew he was going to change my life. I had no idea how much."

Working dogs can restore lives as well as save them. Five years ago hairstylist Debbie Walrod, an athletic young Californian, lost both legs and all of her fingers except the base of her right thumb as the result of a blood infection. She was fortunate to be alive, but don't try telling that to a lithe beauty who had been a ballerina since childhood and had modeled professionally as a teenager. "I'd lie in bed and just sleep or cry," she remembers. "I told my mother that I was so pathetic I couldn't kill myself if I wanted to, and I did want to."

Then Walrod met Oregon, a curly-haired dog trained by CCI. It was love at first sight, but there was

*In recent issues Jack Fincher has written about the Civil War's black Union soldiers; ill-fated folk hero and caver Floyd Collins; and fingerprinting.*

Jessie Morgan and Vincent (left) wait their turn on an elevator during practice session at a mall in Santa Rosa, California. Wendall gives wallet to librarian (above) for Donna Meyers, then practices turning light off (at right). The backpacks are optional equipment.

one hitch. Oregon had been raised by CCI's regional director and was devoted to her, a fact Walrod learned when Oregon abruptly detoured her wheelchair into the director's office during a meeting. Could such a strong attachment possibly be overcome? The final test was a battery of commands that required Oregon to cross the room off-leash and come to Walrod, ignoring the presence of his first master, the director. If he was unable to do that, Walrod and Oregon wouldn't make it as a team.

"At first he went over to her," Walrod remembers, "and nuzzled her hand. But she wouldn't speak to him, look at him, or anything. Boy, was he confused! I gathered my confidence and said, 'Oregon, no! Come here!' He looked back and forth. I kept at him, and finally he came to me. I looked at the director, and a tear was running down her cheek." Today Debbie Walrod once again leads an energetic life, styling hair, making jewelry and, in her spare time, helping CCI raise pups. Oregon is the reason why: "He's my hands, my feet, my best friend."

It's amazing how many things dogs like Oregon can do for people who could not manage without their help. "Service" dogs can turn light switches on and off, raise and lower window shades, lock and unlock wheelchairs, select books from shelves, open and shut doors and drawers, carry a bedpan. One has been taught to brace while its partially paralyzed owner grasps the handles on its "backpack" and hoists herself erect. Another picks up its owner's immobile legs, using the tongues of her shoes, and periodically crosses and uncrosses them to stimulate circulation. Yet another knows how to fetch its master a beer from the refrigerator. "Hearing" dogs learn how to use their bodies to alert their hearing-impaired masters to ringing telephones and doorbells, buzzing smoke detectors, dinging microwave timers and bawling babies. Steve and Nancy Bock of San Jose, California, even use their canine companion, Gala, as the medium for exchanging love notes. The only problem is that sometimes the messages get punctured by tooth marks.

Unlike guide dogs for the blind, an idea that was conceived in Germany after World War I, canine companions for people with physical or developmental disabilities or hearing impairment originated here. When Bergin was taking special-education courses in Northern California during the mid-1970s, she was struck by the emphasis that was placed on what professionals could do for people with disabilities, rather than what the people could do for themselves. Earlier, traveling and teaching in the Orient, she had seen disabled individuals leaning on their burros as they hobbled about hawking their pots and pans. "I wondered how we could give our people the same freedom

Bonita Bergin, who began CCI in 1975, enjoys an affectionate moment with her Border collie, Timbre. Most of the experts she talked to told her that dogs couldn't be trained to help people with disabilities.

and flexibility to fend for themselves," she remembers. "If it couldn't be burros, it had to be dogs."

While teaching in the Santa Rosa public schools, Bergin got a second job at a kennel, where she observed canine behavior and sought advice from experts. Dog trainers told her it couldn't be done. Dog-training manuals said it wasn't possible. Veterinarians said it was a nutty idea. Undeterred, Bergin began to call social agencies, explaining her plan and asking for referrals. Some social workers responded negatively, too. But professionals who worked with disabled people were desperate, and willing to try anything. They agreed to help spread the word that Bergin was looking for candidates who would give it a try.

Finding the people was not a problem, but, as the experts had predicted, training the dogs was. The puppies Bergin tried out were either unsuited for the work or too undisciplined to be taught. Older dogs, on the other hand, were apt to have too many bad habits. So Bergin finally decided to breed the animals herself, pick the pups that demonstrated an aptitude for the work, then figure out how to train them. And that's how CCI got off the ground.

At one point, Bergin's 18 dogs shared the plasterboard walls and bare cement slab of a house she and her husband were building outside Santa Rosa. That was in 1977. Initially she had little idea of what to look for in a dog's manner or behavior that would translate into effective learning. While some dogs were satisfactorily placed, many others proved unsuitable. Eventually, experience showed that golden retrievers and Labradors—and their crossbreeds—were the best at service; Pembroke Welsh corgis and Border collies excelled at signaling.

In 1981, Bergin moved her dogs into an old rented house in town. Then she transferred them to a condemned chicken coop that leaked whenever it rained. CCI limped along with a couple of minimum-wage assistants and volunteer help. Bergin did everything from train the dogs and coach her disabled clients to clean out the kennels. It took her nearly two years to get an animal ready to work; then she would give it to a client. It is no exaggeration to say that the operation was not cost-effective.

Then, one evening in 1983, a man identifying himself as a foundation president called. He and his wife had been visiting San Francisco, he said, and had decided to drive to Santa Rosa. They were coming right over. Minutes later, an elegant limousine pulled up in the pelting rain. Out of it issued an elderly woman in a wheelchair and several other passengers. "We phoned a couple who had one of our dogs and asked them to rush right over and demonstrate," says CCI veterinarian Ruth Daniels, who started out working for the organization as a volunteer. "Afterwards the foundation sent us a check for $10,000. It was a miracle!" CCI razed the chicken coop and built its current facility.

Another turning point had come a year earlier, when Bergin went across town to see the man who arguably qualifies as the dog's best friend—cartoonist Charles Schulz, the creator of Snoopy. Would "Sparky" Schulz, as his friends call him, consent to front, in some

dignified manner, for such a demonstrably dogworthy organization? Schulz wrote out a check for $10,000 on the spot and later paid for and narrated a documentary to be used in promotion. His wife, Jean, joined the CCI board and is now its president. Last year her husband chaired a drive that raised more than a half-million dollars.

Bergin left CCI recently to start up another organization, the Assistance Dog Institute. Her goal is to help others get still more service-dog programs into operation. As for CCI, it now has an annual budget of more than $2 million and a staff of 65. In addition to its headquarters building in Santa Rosa, CCI operates a veterinary clinic there. It also maintains instructional centers in Ohio and New York, as well as at two locations in California. Once the dogs are bred, volunteers raise the pups and teach them basic manners and commands. When the youngsters are 17 months old, they are farmed out to the instructional centers, where college-educated trainers put them through an intensive eight-month "finishing school."

With a decade and a half of experience, CCI has a pretty good idea of what makes for a reliable canine companion. National training manager Clark Pappas compares the ideal disposition to "soft clay." He explains it this way: "We want dogs that are submissive but confident and contained, not out front. That are malleable, not aggressive or dominant. That have asking eyes, not telling eyes." All well and good, but how do you go about breeding for such characteristics? Basically by putting together dogs that have successfully gone through the program. It doesn't always work. "The softer males we like aren't always the best studs," concedes Ruth Daniels.

*You never know what will go wrong*

Currently about one out of every three puppies makes the grade. To be more cost-effective, CCI wants to see that figure improved. But when it comes to animal temperament, you never know what will go wrong. It turned out, for example, that one dog refused to accept credit cards. Or, as a trainer put it, "Mame didn't take plastic." Nobody knew why, but eventually the problem was solved.

Just what CCI is up against can be seen in the saga of one handsome golden retriever who sired 240 of the puppies that have been raised by the organization before a devastating Achilles heel was detected in his makeup. At times, this dog refused to accept commands and resisted carrying anything on his back, including the small backpack that some canine companions must wear. These deficiencies were transmitted to some of his descendants, making them unfit for service. This is why dogs are now required to pass the CCI curriculum before they are used for breeding.

Hereditary roadblocks aside, CCI's track record is impressive. Currently, about 600 of its graduates are at work in 38 states and four foreign countries. This is a tribute not only to the dogs but also to the ingenious curriculum Bergin and her associates have developed. It features such clever wrinkles as a series of obstacle courses that promote physical and mental flexibility; a set of exercises in "prolonged eye contact" that heighten attention span and increase responsiveness; and, for puppies, a number of relatively simple tasks (holding a pencil while sitting; carrying a paper bag) that help prepare them for the kind of work they will do when they grow up.

The sequential system of instruction involves 60 separate commands—building blocks for a repertoire of jobs that couple a person's needs to the dog's innate desire to please and its capacity to learn. Simple acts are taught first, then strung together to embody harder tasks. Thus "Up" and "Shake," once mastered, can be combined into "Switch"—the command for turning off

Jessie Morgan and friend Lee Gardner celebrate quietly after her graduation from boot camp with Vincent.

Volunteer Debra Walrod and her dog, Oregon, follow Jason Brownlie and Pandora during practice session.

a light. Filly's jellybean transaction resulted from seven different commands she had been taught, which even I could string together.

CCI must also teach those who are going to receive the dogs the skills they will need to master the animals. To qualify for a dog, applicants must endure a gauntlet of application forms, a two-year waiting list and a series of interviews, all leading up to boot camp. A three-week pressure cooker held three times a year, boot camp annually brings together a total of 75 to 80 people and a like number of dogs for tryouts at CCI's regional training centers. The teams either bond or wash out. Approximately one in 15 human recruits fails to make it for physical or emotional reasons. Many of those who don't make it the first time try again. Only a handful have been rejected twice. John Giacomazzi of San Jose, California, flunked his initial try primarily because his voice wasn't expressive enough. Giacomazzi practiced his inflections at home, on his mother, for a year ("Mom—Look! Get it! Good!"), came back, got another dog and graduated.

Four of the five rookies in my boot camp faced similar frustrations. Mary Sexton of Seattle, Washington, speaks well, but during boot camp her confidence was undercut by problems with spatial orientation. Leaving a Santa Rosa college campus one afternoon, she almost drove her wheelchair off the side of a ramp when she became visually confused by the sidewalk's brickwork pattern. Tim Beidler of Portland, Oregon, who lost the use of his legs in an auto accident, suffered a setback when the dog assigned to him proved too difficult to control. He had to switch animals with Rob Roseberry of Victoria, British Columbia, a strapping 185-pounder disabled by a disease of the nerves and muscles in his legs. Roseberry had found that his upper-body strength could not compensate for the fear of failure that was getting in the way of communicating with his first dog, Xylan, a free spirit with a very short attention span.

Gene Hopkins, the man from Salinas, California, with the surgically fused joints, had an unsettling experience when his young Border collie, Drake, spied his previous owner strolling in the mall and bolted off in pursuit—still leashed to his new master. Instinctively, Hopkins, who has had plenty of hard falls, went into a protective somersault and crashed to the floor unhurt. A day later, Drake saw his first basketball being dribbled in a gym. He had to be restrained. Diagnosis: an exaggerated impulse to act on its visual attraction to movement that makes his breed excel at herding. The next morning Drake was forced to endure a ball being rolled past him time after time as the stern command "Stay" was punctuated by emphatic tugs on his choke chain whenever he failed to obey. In less than an hour he was cured.

Eventually, all five of my classmates passed. At first, Mary Sexton tried too hard and wanted to quit when her initial efforts didn't succeed. On solo day she wept. "Don't give up on me," she pleaded with her instructor; "if you don't, I won't give up on myself." Assured that he wouldn't, Sexton pulled herself—and her dog, Mame—together. "I learned more about myself than I ever expected," she recalls. "Somehow the dog picks up on emotions that I would normally hide, and that forces me to be more honest."

Tim Beidler succeeded, too—but barely. At one point he jerked the leash angrily when Xylan sniffed the ground. "Watch that," Beidler was told in the trainers' postmortem. "It affects how people perceive you with the dog." Even Rob Roseberry finally had to accept the fact that he couldn't simply muscle his way to success. "What a time to be all thumbs," he quipped when he had trouble attaching Daisy's backpack with his numbed fingers.

When boot camp ended and everyone was getting ready to go home, it was Gene Hopkins who came up with a fitting benediction. "From now on," he said with an affectionate look at the dog that had done everything asked of him, "we're in this thing together. Aren't we, Drake?"

Donna Meyers, who was injured in an auto accident, tells Wendall something that pleases him very much.

MARCEL JOJOLA liked the Saturn SL1 so much, he had his customized for work.

Like a lot of California towns, Bear Valley has budget concerns. And like a lot of Californians, Chief Jojola is a fan of imported cars. He has two Subarus at home, two at the Bear Valley police station, and when they needed a new squad car this year, he just planned on getting another one.

Then someone suggested that perhaps Bear Valley should buy American. Tax dollars, and all. So Marcel, whose most recent experience was all import, wasn't quite sure what to do.

Base M.S.R.P. including retailer preparation. Tax, license, transportation and options additional. © 1991 Saturn Corporation.

Until the day he ran across a Saturn ad touting the SL1 and its $8995* price tag. Taking along his special police-issue driving gloves, Marcel went for a "law enforcement-style" test drive. (We were pretty relieved to get back to the showroom.)

Anyway, to cut to the chase, the Saturn gave Marcel the performance he was looking for in a patrol car. It's American, which took care of Bear Valley patriotism. And as for the budget folks, they were so happy with the value they were getting with a Saturn, they let Marcel buy two.

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# He was a lion among painters

*This is how his peers in China saw Chang Dai-chien; now, an exhibit at the Smithsonian's Sackler Gallery confirms their judgment*

Collection of Chun-Hsien Chiang

Who is narrow of vision cannot be bighearted; who is narrow of spirit cannot take long, easy strides. This old Chinese proverb illustrates perfectly the expansive and astonishing life of Chang Dai-chien, arguably the most prolific, learned and well-traveled Chinese artist of the 20th century. He produced some 30,000 paintings, mastering virtually all of the styles of the Chinese painting tradition. The Smithsonian's Arthur M. Sackler Gallery is now exhibiting 87 of his works; "Challenging the Past: The Paintings of Chang Dai-chien" will later travel to the Asia Society in New York City and the Saint Louis Art Museum. Organized by Sackler curator Shen C. Y. Fu with cocurator Jan Stuart, the show is accompanied by a fascinating catalog.

Born in 1899 in Sichuan Province to a financially struggling but artistic family, this gifted nonconformist would push the boundaries of everything he did—whether painting, calligraphy, poetry, gardening or cooking. Nothing in his life happened in halves. His first commission came at the age of 12, when a traveling fortune-teller asked him to paint a new set of divining cards for her. Five years later he was captured by bandits on his way home from boarding school in Chongqing. When the bandit chief ordered him to write a letter home asking for money, he was so impressed by Chang's calligraphy that he made the boy his personal secretary. Chang spent his hundred days of captivity reading books of poetry found in the homes looted by the bandits.

Chang affected the beard and long robe of an ancient scholar, had several wives simultaneously, curried favor with influential people and traveled the world—he lived many years in South America and the United States—with a splashy entourage of relatives, hangers-on and a pet gibbon. He also freely crossed the line between emulation of old Chinese masters and forgery. To some degree, his forgeries were an elaborate game to see whether he could fool connoisseurs. And he did; an unknown number of his works, bearing fake seals of centuries-old artists, reside in museums around the world, and undoubtedly have caused curators some sleepless nights.

But underneath the showiness, Chang had the heart of an artist. All his life, he sought out the finest examples to learn from—whether the Buddhist cave paintings of Dunhuang (preserved for more than a millennium on the old Silk Road) or, later in his life, the action paintings of the Abstract Expressionists in the West. He made all these styles his own, then ran with them. By the time he died, at 84, he was in full stride.

*Constance A. Bond*

Chang did *Horse and Groom* in Tang dynasty style after 30-month sojourn studying Dunhuang cave murals.

Collection of Chang Sing-cheng

*Nesting in a Pine* (1966) is a self-portrait in which the artist, then 67, showed himself aloof from the world.

The brushwork used to depict the pine tree, and the composition, recall the works of Shitao (1642-1707).

Collection of Alice King

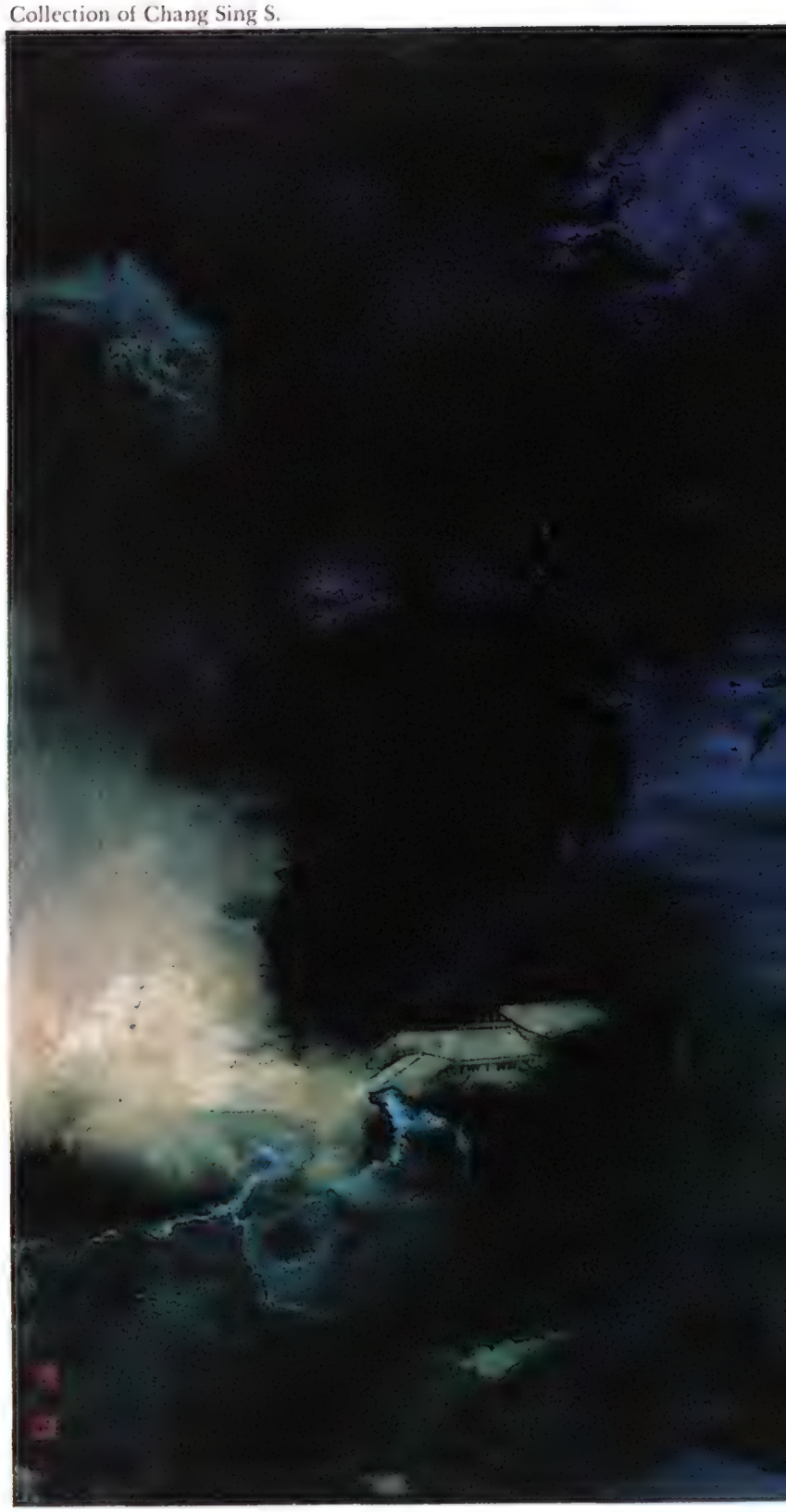
Loose, exuberant brushstrokes of *Opera Character* (1938) capture the vitality of the performer onstage.

*Tibetan Women with Mastiff and Puppy* was probably inspired by 13th-century hand scroll by Qian Xuan.

Musée Cernuschi, Paris

Collection of Chang Hsu Wen-po

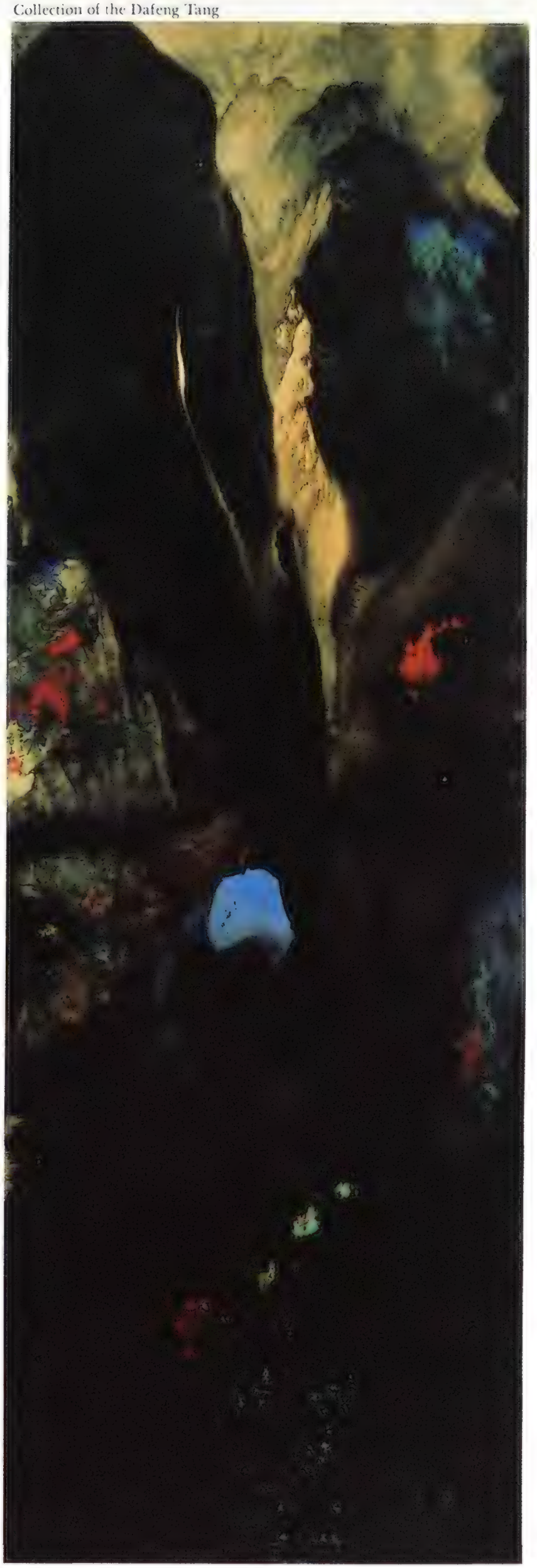
Collection of Chang Sing S.



At left, *Clear Morning over Lakes and Mountains* was an "honest copy" of a hanging scroll attributed to a tenth-century artist. Chang painted another nearly identical scroll as a forgery; it was purchased in 1957 by the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Folding fan at right, *Blue Peony* (1949), is done in meticulous *gongbi* style. Above and at far right: *Approach of a Mountain Storm* and *Dawning Light in Autumn Gorges*, two works from the 1960s, combine an eighth-century landscape style with the Abstract Expressionism that Chang encountered in the West.

Collection of Paul Chang

Collection of the Dafeng Tang

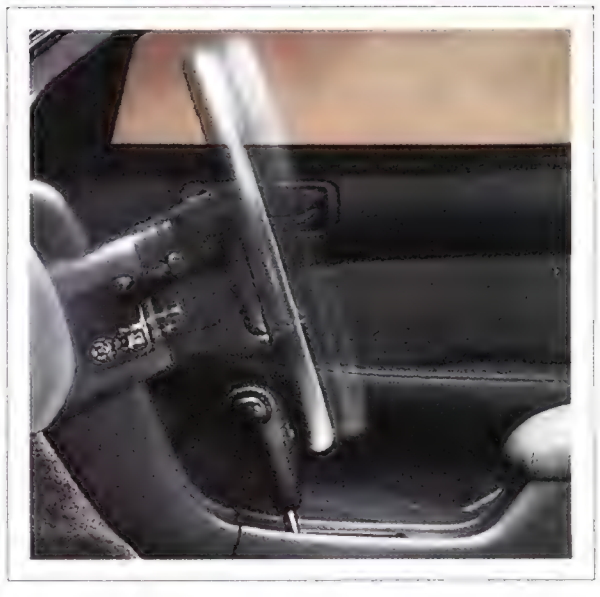


Chang Dai-chien painted *Vermilion Lotuses*, 2½ by 4½ feet, a few months before his death in 1983. The work is a masterpiece of his splashed-ink-and-color technique.

Collection of Chung Kit Fok

Although by then impaired vision had affected his artistic range, it is evident from the stem sweeping across the painting that he retained calligraphic brilliance.

# A Car So Refined, It S
# And Lets You Out



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A sculptor creates abstraction in Carrara stone from Italy's sweeping, quarry-carved Apuan Range (right). The tiny village below the peaks was founded as a mining center in 500 B.C.

*By David Roberts*

# Magical marble, that gleaming rock for the ages

*Prized by sculptors, builders and connoisseurs, the sensuous white stone of Carrara, Italy, and western Colorado is again in high demand*

It was a blistering July day at the Bettogli quarry near Carrara, Italy. Sweating in the sun, ten men had sawed and trimmed and hauled the white marble since dawn. Now it was noon. The workers unwrapped their lunches as they sat in the shade of the precipice from which they extracted the beautiful stone. They sent a young boy to fetch drinking water.

Without warning, the cliff face collapsed. The men had no chance. Tons of fractured marble cascaded down, crushing all ten workers in an instant. The boy, whose errand had saved his life, returned to discover the debris of the catastrophe.

The most sensuous stone in the world, marble may also be the most dangerous to extract. Over the years the Carrara quarries, which have produced more marble than any other place on Earth, have seen scores, maybe hundreds, of workers die as they wrested the stone from its bed in the Apuan Alps. The 1911 cliff

collapse was merely the most dramatic disaster. To prevent such cave-ins, acrobats called *tecchiaioli* have for centuries lowered themselves by rope down quarry faces, as they dislodge loose rock with sledgehammers, crowbars and even pneumatic drills. It is a very hazardous business, for the worker must often spring into the air as the rock collapses beneath his feet.

Seven thousand miles to the west, in the Elk Range of the Rocky Mountains, lies another marble quarry that has claimed its share of lives—Colorado-Yule, from which came the serene white stone for such monuments as the Lincoln Memorial and the Tomb of the Unknowns. Today, with marble once again in demand as an architectural material after having been out of fashion for decades, both places are humming with activity. The two, the legendary Carrara and the little-known Colorado-Yule, are a study in contrasts; all they share is the matchless beauty of their stone.

*Photographs by Pierre Boulat/Woodfin Camp*

*A rock for the ages*

Newly sliced from its quarry bed with diamond saws, a 700-ton block is wedged apart for its final break.

Recently I visited Carrara, to see how what is still the world's largest and most sophisticated marble operation is conducted. The town lies only about five miles inland from the Ligurian Riviera, not far from such pleasure spas as Portofino and Portovenere. Carrara, however, is no resort but a dusty, crowded working-class burg, where communists and anarchists gather outside the cafés to berate the government. On weekdays, the narrow streets are loud with the rumble of Trasporto Marmo flatbed trucks carrying one crude block apiece to the finishing yards. The Torrente del Carrione, the stream that splashes through town on its way to the sea, is chalky white with marble dust.

Many of the sidewalks of Carrara are made of marble, as are the wayside Renaissance fountains from which old men and children still drink. There are scores of marble statues scattered about the town. A pair of giants from the 1930s flank the door of the Post and Telegraph Building: heroic nudes in the Greek style, they are quarry workers, one with a mallet and spike, the other with a sledgehammer on his shoulder and a coil of rope for his loincloth.

*Vivid reminders of earlier perils*

For several days I wandered through the Apuan Alps above Carrara, where at least 650 different quarries have been gouged over the years, more than half of them now abandoned. Against the advice of warning signs, I scrambled up a long *ravaneti*, a steep fan of marble scree down which a sled called a *lizza* once skidded the fresh blocks. Men used thick ropes cinched off to posts fixed in the ground to restrain a block, which weighed as much as 25 tons, as they lowered it a few feet at a time. Other men had the nasty job of laying soaped wooden crosspieces in front of the sliding stone. If a rope broke or the men lost control of the braking system, the block tore loose down the hillside, killing anyone who could not get out of the way. Though the quarry above me had shut down perhaps a hundred years ago, the *ravaneti* was still so loose and dangerous that it was scary to climb. I couldn't imagine skipping down it with my arms full of soaped wooden crosspieces to lay across the path of the deadly stone.

According to firm local tradition, Michelangelo himself twice "escaped death by the skin of his teeth" above Carrara when runaway blocks nearly flattened him. As sculptors had for at least a century before him, Michelangelo traveled to Carrara to choose his own stones. On Monte Altissimo he discovered a superb *statuario* marble, of a purer and more consistent whiteness than anything found elsewhere in Italy. Michelangelo loved the stone so much that he pondered a grandiose project, a kind of 16th-century Mount Rushmore. "One day while there," said Ascanio Condivi,

Reenactment of the *lizza* method of moving stone from quarry to road below is reminder of marble's perils.

Upended by the weight of a quarry block, transport truck will settle as the marble is shifted forward.

who had the story from the master's lips, "he was looking at the landscape, and he was seized with a wish to carve, out of a mountain overlooking the sea, a colossus which would be visible from afar to seafarers. . . . And he would certainly have done it if he had had enough time."

Marble has always inspired mystic flights and emotional excesses. The shiny crystalline specks in Carrara marble, called *lucciche*, were supposed to be the tears of Christ. At Páros in ancient Greece, the stone breakers swore that they once cracked open a block of marble to find a perfect statue of the god Silenus inside. Praising the sublimity of the Cnidus Venus carved by the Greek master Praxiteles, Pliny says "that a man once fell in love with it and hiding by night embraced it, and that a stain betrays this lustful act." Roman quarrymen believed that marble grew and healed over the scars of their toil, so there would never be a shortage of the material.

Geologically, marble is simply limestone that has been recrystallized by heat or pressure. Its different colors derive mostly from intermixture with other minerals, and men who deal in marble have developed a vocabulary as rich as an oenophile's to define its varieties. They rhapsodize over Portoro Macchia Fine (black with gold veins), Rosa Duchesa (pink or gray), Cristallino from Turkey, Fior di Pesco from Verona, the Spanish Negro Marquina (jet black with white swirls)—as well as dozens of other shades whose names roll off the tongue: Bardiglio, Arabescato, Serpentino Classico, Pietra Serena, Pietra Dorata and Paradiso D.

*David Roberts is the coauthor of* Mount McKinley: The Conquest of Denali. *He wrote on the Albigensian Crusade for* SMITHSONIAN *in the May 1991 issue.*

Since Michelangelo's day, no marble has been more highly prized than the *statuario* of Carrara. It may or may not be the purest white marble in the world, but the respect in which Carrara *statuario* outdoes any other marble is its consistency—a scarcity of off-color veins, and a uniformity of grain and crystals.

Within the past decade, however, after intensive quarrying over a span of more than 2,000 years, the known deposits of *statuario* at Carrara have all but played out. Nowadays a block of *statuario* is fought over by sculptors from distant countries.

Nevertheless, Carrara's workmen continue to extract marble—less esteemed than *statuario* but still of high quality—for the architectural market. (Exports from the area increased from 160,000 metric tons in 1950 to more than 1 million metric tons in 1989.) The quarries still bustle as they have since ancient times; only the techniques have changed. In the days of the Romans, the blocks were separated from their beds by means of wooden wedges that, soaked with water, expanded and cracked the rock. From the 12th century through the 19th, the work was still done mostly by hand, with metal wedges and hammers. Explosives were tried from the 18th century on, but they tended to shatter and ruin the rock.

By 1895, a helicoidal wire had been invented for cutting the stone. As a coolant and abrasive, a slurry of quartz sand and water was fed into cracks where the wire was cutting; workers grew so skilled at the technique they could gauge the proper slurry mixture by sound alone. To minimize breakdown, continuous wire loops as much as a mile in length were strung across the countryside. The wreckage of these bizarre circuits—rusty tangles of wire in the grass, sagging pulleys where the wire changed direction—lies

Treasure house of marble: exotic specimens from all over the world are shipped to a factory in Carrara that specializes in cutting and finishing the rough-textured blocks.

strewn all over the Apuan hills. Only in the late 1970s did efficient diamond-studded saws come into use.

The quarries operating around Carrara today are grim, no-nonsense factories of raw stone. Revolutionizing the transport of marble, trucks have blazed fierce zigzag roads up the hillsides, so steep that rather than rounding a hairpin at each turn, a truck must often ascend every other segment in reverse. The roar of engines is incessant. From a distant hillside, you watch as bulldozers dump rock debris off a cliff edge, painting another white brushstroke on a slide-track that rives the forest like a lightning streak.

Tearing the most beautiful stone in the world loose from its geological habitat is an ugly, noisy business. One longs for the Victorian pageantry of the *lizza* and the oxcart. Yet the industry must always have been hard, dirty and dangerous. Edward Hutton, the English traveler who celebrated all things Tuscan, was appalled by Carrara and its quarries in 1906. "More and more as I went among [the people] it seemed to me that the mountains had brutalised those who won from them their snowy treasure. In all Carrara and the valley of Torano I saw no beautiful or distinguished faces. . . . There is no joy in this labour, and the savage, harsh yell of the machines drown[s] any song that of old might have lightened the toil."

The only concessions to tourism around Carrara are the numerous souvenir shops selling marble knick-knacks. At first I was dismayed to see the noble stone reduced to ashtrays, perfume atomizers, turtles, mother-and-child paperweights, figurines of cute peasants covered with a sugary blue glaze, and hyperrealist oranges and bananas painted the colors of real fruit. Yet marble has always been put to pedestrian uses. In the 15th century it was used to make cannonballs; in the 17th, to fashion sewer pipes; in the 19th, to line urinals. When Michelangelo visited Carrara in 1505, there were already some 50 local masters at work, churning out mass-produced candlesticks, oil jars and holy water stoups. We think of polished marble as gloriously bodying forth its natural color, but one reason the stone has been valued over the centuries is that it is easy to paint. In ancient Greece, statues made of flawless white marble were painted in vivid colors.

One day I visited the Nicoli workshop in town, where artisans and artists labor away amid the dust and din of forklifts and sanding machines. In a corner I found a young woman wearing goggles and a Walkman as she put the finishing touches on a graceful abstract sculpture. The stone, glowing almost blue in the shadows, was *statuario*. I watched her expert ministrations for a few moments, then asked in my phrase-book Italian, "*Scultore?*" ("Are you the sculptor?"). She laughed, said "No, Cardenas" and pointed to a nearby facsimile of the piece she was working on.

I caught on. The sculptor, Agustin Cardenas, a renowned Cuban artist living in Paris, could no longer in this impatient century be involved with the actual carving of marble. Instead, he made a model out of gesso, gave it to the technician in the Nicoli workshop, and had her produce the marble sculpture that would sell for tens of thousands of dollars. I shouldn't have been scandalized—apparently this is standard practice nowadays—but I was. I could hear Michelangelo turning in his grave.

It is, after all, what happens when you take hammer and chisel to marble that led sculptors long before Praxiteles to cherish the stone. No other kind of rock can be so lovingly shaped, although marble can also be notoriously fickle: the tales are legion of a sculptor's

penultimate tap cracking his masterpiece down the middle. The astounding variety of marble (60 different kinds in the Apuan area alone), along with the beauty of nearly all its avatars and the gleam it takes under high polish, helps account for the desire people have felt for the stone for more than five millennia.

The luster of marble, which gives it a look of being alive, is due to the fact that light penetrates the stone to a depth of as much as an inch and a half, to be reflected back out by the crystals inside. If you take an inch-thick slab of white marble and hold it up to a light bulb, a warm, diffuse glow permeates the stone. The skylights of the Lincoln Memorial are made not of glass but of marble.

Vogues in marble have waxed and waned over the centuries. For more than 600 years, from the fall of Rome to the 12th century, the stone was hardly quarried at all. During the 17th century, colored marbles became the rage, as Baroque churches all over Europe testify. The shift in taste was disastrous for Carrara, but a Neoclassical return to white saved the quarries. More recently, the 1960s saw marble plunge into a worldwide nadir. (Colorado-Yule had already gone out of business, during World War II.) The architectural fashion of the day was artificial materials: pre-cast concrete, aluminum, formica, glass and the like. But now, marble is back in style with a vengeance, in demand for building facades, interior trim and finishes. No stone is more sought after than *statuario,* or as they call it at Colorado-Yule, just plain statuary.

*The vagaries of taste in marble*

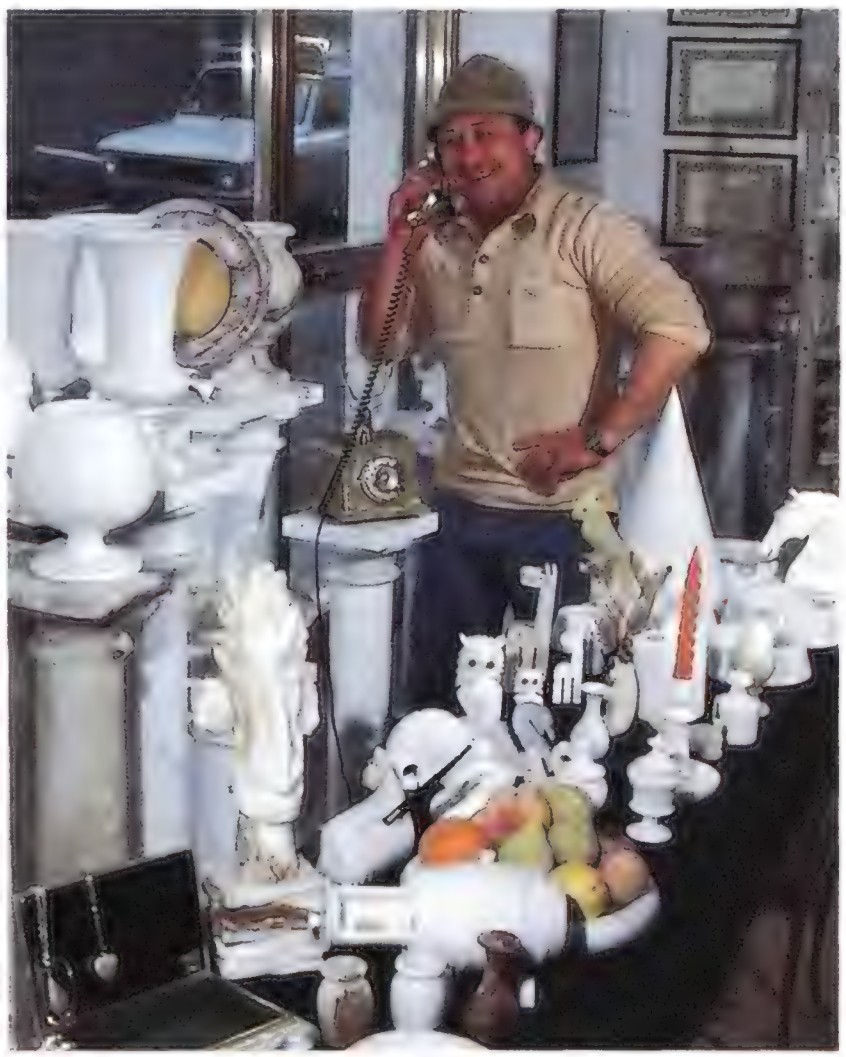
As an Outward Bound instructor in 1963, I had jeeped and hiked one August day up to the abandoned quarry to have a look. The site lies hidden on the west slope of a narrow, V-notch valley covered with aspens and evergreens, through which the waters of Yule Creek dance from one ledge to the next. Unlike Carrara, Colorado-Yule is entirely underground. The early workers cut two great portals in the hillside, dug in several hundred feet, then started to mine the stone straight downward. Decade by decade their pit deepened, until by the end they had to hoist the quarried blocks from crane to crane a full 240 feet, then slide them out the portals. Peering into the chasm that sunny day, I had been stunned by the overhanging gloom, the rotting ladders suspended in air, the drip of unseen rivulets, the dull glare of an ice floor far below.

In 1990, after a dormancy of 49 years, the quarry reopened. Ironically some of the first marble from Yule Creek was exported to Italy. The dwindling of the *statuario* reserves at Carrara, along with the fact that marble as a building material is in a worldwide boom (SMITHSONIAN, October 1988), had motivated a new generation of entrepreneurs to pull the wraps off the quarry.

A few months ago, I returned to Colorado-Yule for a visit. Just as in 1963, the Crystal River valley remains as sleepy and lovely a piece of alpine backcountry as Colorado can boast. There could be no greater contrast with Carrara, clanking and humming with the toil of thousands of marble specialists. At Colorado-Yule there are only 16 local laborers, who had to be trained from scratch. To quarry marble in this valley full of defunct silver mines strikes the residents as distinctly exotic.

My guide at Colorado-Yule was Stewart Hurst, an ex-military man who a few years ago thought he had retired to the near-ghost town of Marble (pop. 65). Foolhardy visitors to the abandoned quarry occasionally shinnied down rusty cables to explore inside; sometimes they fell. Over the years Hurst helped rescue four people and two dogs who had come to grief inside the dark pit. "They weren't dead," he said laconically, "just broke up pretty good."

When Colorado-Yule decided to reopen, Hurst got the job of quarry manager. To facilitate access to the precious stone, the company bored a tunnel into the quarry at ground level. In the months before operations started, Hurst visited often: in winter, he took his kids to ice-skate on the frozen pool in the quarry



Carrara shop owner Julio Rossi displays some of the 2,000 types of marble knickknacks from his factory.

Man drives small truck through narrow passageway in the Monte Altissimo bedrock to get to the finest *statuario* marble in nearby quarry. The lines on the marble sides were made when corridor was cut through.

floor. "I was kind of sorry to see the first machine come in," he said. "It was a great place to meditate."

In 1963 I had peered into the darkness from the south portal, 240 feet above; now I stood at the bottom of the pit and craned my neck so I could look beyond the overhanging walls to the square of blue sky in the ceiling. "It's like a gigantic cathedral," said Hurst, approving my murmurs of awe.

We walked across the bedrock, through an inch or two of white muck that stuck to our boots—marble dust turned to paste by the seeping water. A bulldozer was tilting a huge block to turn it over; nearby, three men set up a diamond saw to bisect another stone. Even by the standards of single quarries at Carrara, Colorado-Yule is small potatoes. Only 35 blocks a month are trucked to the railhead at Glenwood Springs. The stone is of such quality, however, that this is enough to ensure a good profit, and at the current rate, it will take 300 years before the known deposits are worked out.

Hurst led me to an inner corner of the quarry, where the stone gleamed dully in the shadows, and said, "This is where the Lincoln Memorial came from." Pointing at ledges far above, he sketched out the remarkable system of derricks and cranes that, before 1941, had hoisted the blocks to the portals. Later I met 92-year-old Elmer Bair, one of the few men still alive who had worked in the quarry in the old days. "Everybody had to get out of the way when they lifted the blocks," he said. "I was always amazed there weren't more accidents."

Hurst indicated walls covered with black soot: "The workers burned everything they could get their hands on to stay warm in winter." The pluck and daring of the pioneers, those who worked from 1905 to 1941, was formidable. The quarry lies at 9,340 feet, where the thin air makes even casual exertion an ordeal. At that altitude, the snow can come in September and linger well into June. During many years Colorado-Yule stayed open through the winter, and avalanches crossing the approach road were a constant hazard. To minimize the risk, the company built a rickety barracks just below the mine, but the workers were unhappy boarding there. One afternoon Elmer Bair sneaked down to Marble so that he could spend the night with his wife. In the morning, as he skied back up in a heavy snowstorm, he got caught in an avalanche that carried him hundreds of feet. (The company employs an avalanche expert today.)

From the portal openings at the top of the quarry, a

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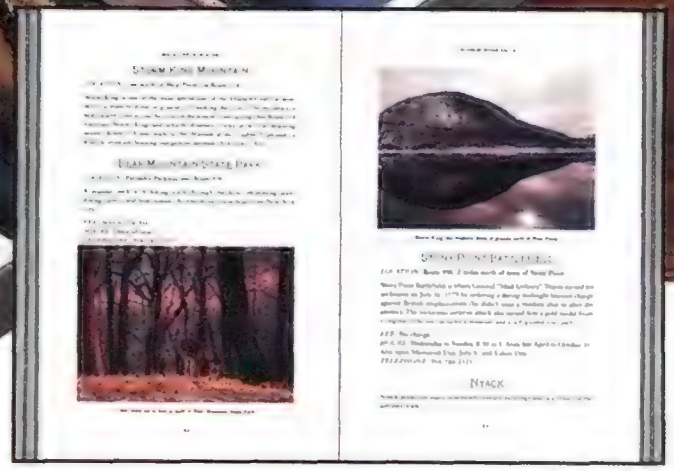


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A pile of discards from quarrying at Colorado-Yule is a bonanza for professional and amateur sculptors.

cable system lifted the blocks down to a primitive haul road; the old wooden tower that supported it still stands. At first the stones were carried four miles down to Marble in horse-drawn wagons, later in motorized tractors, and after 1910, by railroad. The grade, which ranges from 4 to 17 percent, was, according to Bair, the steepest slick-wheel (as opposed to cog) railway in the world. Here was the most dangerous part of the whole operation. A number of workers, including the quarry founder and owner, Col. Channing Meek, died when they jumped off runaway trains. Bair ran a temperamental new machine, called the Black Bull, that plowed snow from the tracks. He became a legend when the Bull broke loose down a steep grade and he brought it to a halt after everyone else had jumped for their lives.

The raw stone was finished on the spot in Marble, where the largest mill in the world—a stupendous 1,465 feet long by 80 feet wide—was completed in 1910. In the company's heyday, 700 employees worked in the quarry and the mill, many of them Italians imported from the Carrara area.

In the town of Redstone, 13 miles downvalley, I met Eric Johnson, a bearded eccentric who has become a well-known sculptor in the West. Sixteen years before, a starving artist, he had moved to Redstone just to work in the splendid stone that lay in discarded lumps all along the banks of the Crystal River. Of Carrara marble, which Johnson has also carved, he said, "It's difficult to work with. It tends to split on you. Compared to the marble here, it has a grayish cast. When you polish a human figure in it, it looks dead—the blood's gone."

Johnson's fingertips caressed the surface of the piece he was working on. "That's the beauty of this Yule stone," he said. "It has a very fine grain, fine crystals. And it's so dense. It weighs more than other marble." His fingers moved. "Feel the ripples. Feel the flow. You're not going to see this visually. You need to touch."

I was inclined to take Johnson's praise with a grain of salt—as the effusion of a local booster. But the next day I met Ferdinando Borghetti, the quarry master at Colorado-Yule. A short, grizzled 56-year-old from Carrara, he first went to work in his home quarries at age 15. In 1966 he left Italy to direct the opening of new quarries all over the world. As an itinerant expert, he has broken ground in Gabon, Malaysia, Brazil, Peru, Singapore, Cuba and more than a dozen other countries. Colorado-Yule was the 58th quarry he had opened, but his first in the United States.

Borghetti was just beginning to learn English, and my Italian had not improved since my visit to Carrara. "This *statuario* is superior," he said emphatically. "This have the crystal, the conformation, 75 million years' compression—the maximum. Is flexible, manipulable. Every people likes it—Japanese, even Italian. For me, this quarry is number one in the world." As Borghetti talked on about *verso* and *contro* cuts, about the craft of reading veins, about knowing where the best marble was hidden ("the north—finished," he said of Colorado-Yule; "the south—it goes"), about where the stone was most "alive," he lost me utterly. But it was poetry to listen to, and I realized that marble quarrying was still as pure an art as winegrowing.

"How do you know all this?" I asked.

Borghetti smiled. "The stone—it speaks to you."

*Two years to cut the stone*

During my tour of Colorado-Yule, Stewart Hurst had told me about the quarrying of the block for the Tomb of the Unknowns. It took a year to cut a cube of the finest white stone loose from its bed—and then the stone was rejected because of veins of a smoke-colored impurity called Colorado Cloud. It took another year to cut a second stone, which was finished in January 1931. The block weighed 56 tons—at the time, the largest single stone ever quarried anywhere in the world.

Elmer Bair ran the locomotive that eased that block down the steep grade to Marble. So heavy was the load that the boxings in the train's wheels failed. A mechanic in Marble worked two days and nights straight through to build new wheels, and finally Bair got the massive block down to town. The stone was carried by rail to Vermont, where it was dressed and finished before being sent on to Arlington National Cemetery.

Meanwhile, according to Hurst, a third stone had

been quarried, just in case. After the 1941 closing, its whereabouts were forgotten. When Colorado-Yule announced its reopening in 1990, an Arizona sculptor contacted the company. Legend had it that the third stone lay at the bottom of the sump at the lowest level of the quarry, in a gray pool of water 45 feet deep.

Hurst walked me to the edge of the sump as he continued the story. "The sculptor said, 'If you can find it, I'll pay whatever it takes to get it out.' We probed all over with rods, but we couldn't find a thing. Last fall we held an old-timers' day. One of the visitors was a 93-year-old man who had been the last rock boss on the site. I asked him about the third stone. He said, 'Oh, it's up there.'" Hurst pointed to a spot 60 feet up the sheer east wall of the quarry. A dim, cubical niche broke the smooth facade. Inside sat a huge block of perfect white stone. In 1931, the workers had simply nudged it out of the way into the corner. Then they had cut on down into the floor, quarrying one block after another. By the time a decade had passed, the third stone was stranded in a giant, 60-foot-high cubbyhole.

"What are you going to do with it?" I asked.

"Nothing," said Hurst, shaking his head. "I don't know any way to get it out without destroying it."

After 50 years of silence, the Western quarry is back in full operation again. From these marble beds came massive blocks for the Tomb of the Unknowns and the exterior pillars and walls of the Lincoln Memorial.

Both: H. Brooks Walker

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Not yet 30, Pushkin was already the author of haunting *Boris Godunov*, and working on *Eugene Onegin*, when he sat for portrait in 1827.

*By Robert Wernick*

# Now and forever, the poet of the people

*Wastrel and genius, rake and visionary, Aleksandr Pushkin revolutionized Russian literature, created a sublime and soaring poetry, and won the undying adoration of his countrymen*

*Photographs by Eduard Gladkov*

They used to tell a story in Moscow about a competition to choose a design for a monument to Pushkin. Pushkin being the national poet of Russia, this was a matter of some political importance and was brought for judgment to Stalin himself. The eagle eye of the dictator passed over the sculptors' projects one by one. There was Pushkin at his writing table, Pushkin musing in a birch forest, Pushkin dancing with gypsies. Finally, the winning design appeared: Stalin reading Pushkin.

The point of the story was not so much the megalomania of the old tyrant. It was rather that there was one part of the Russian heritage that even Stalin did not dare to challenge. He might rewrite history almost daily, casting old heroes into the dustbin to accord with shifts in the party line, but he had to leave the beloved poet alone. Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, Tolstoy, might have their ups and downs in official favor: Pushkin remained immovable on his pedestal.

Stalin is in the dustbin now, but Aleksandr Sergeyevich Pushkin still stands. Everyone in Russia has read him, everyone is ready to quote him. There are Pushkin streets, squares and parks in almost every major city. There is even a city named Pushkin, the site of the former imperial summer residence of Tsarskoye Selo, where the poet spent his school years. There are any number of Pushkin museums, countless Pushkin monuments.

His mother's estate of Mikhaylovskoye, near Pskov, where he learned to love the Russian countryside and the tales of the Russian peasants, is a national shrine. And Seymon Geichenko, the man who restored it after the Nazis looted it during World War II, is a national hero. Children come with flowers, and old women with tears, to the field by the Black River in the St. Petersburg suburbs where Pushkin was fatally wounded in a duel 155 years ago. Pilgrims flock to the apartment in the city where he was brought to die, where his volumes

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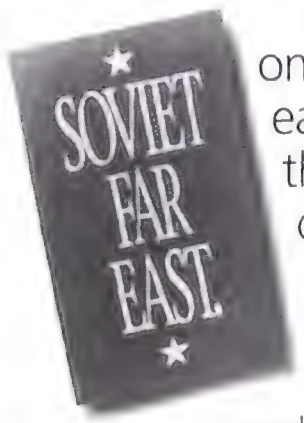


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In *Eugene Onegin* manuscript margin, doodles include poet's self-portrait.

of Wordsworth and Southey lie unopened on his desk. Visitors search out his grave in the monastery near Mikhaylovskoye, the taverns where he used to get drunk, the baths where he steamed out his dissipations in Tbilisi.

A few years ago the Soviet government, in need of hard cash, sold at auction in Moscow a batch of contemporary Soviet art. Almost the first use they made of the money was to buy, in Switzerland, a bundle of Pushkin's letters to his intended bride.

This Russian infatuation with Pushkin is unique. Other peoples have a national poet whom they revere and quote, whose tomb they visit and whose verses they drill into their children. But nowhere will you find the intensely personal, familial feeling that exists between ordinary Russians and Pushkin. Italians may be aware that their Dante had a crush on an adolescent girl. Englishmen may be puzzled by the will in which Shakespeare left his wife his second-best bed. These are hardly, however, subjects that will pop up in a casual dinner conversation or will cause angry shouts and table thumping if they do.

But go to one of those traditional Russian parties of which one acquaintance of mine says, "We spend two hours singing, two hours fighting and two hours crying," and mention the name of the poet's wife, the beautiful, flighty Natalya, and you will set off impassioned debate on all sides. Was she worthy of him? Was he fair to her? Did she betray him?

They will debate just as fiercely and possessively about the characters in Pushkin's works. A few years ago there was a symposium of Soviet and American scholars in Washington, D.C. "Several American Pushkinists," reported a participant, "discussing possible feminist approaches to *Eugene Onegin* were cut short in the corridor with the curt retort of one Soviet delegate: 'Leave Tatyana alone.' "

Tatyana Larin is the heroine of the verse novel that is Pushkin's most ambitious work. It is a matter of faith with Russian readers and critics alike that she is the embodiment of all that is best in Russian womanhood, all that is noble and passionately sincere. To the Western reader who knows no more about her than what is found in the novel, she is more apt to seem an engaging goose of a country girl who lets her heart be broken by the rake Onegin, and later turns with improbable speed into a poised grande dame of St. Petersburg society.

*Eugene Onegin* itself is regarded by Russians as one of the masterworks of world literature, their counterweight to Shakespeare. Of course they read it in Russian, and everyone agrees that the language has never been more supple and more subtle, more close to that "concord of magic sound, feeling and thoughts" that was Pushkin's aim.

His rich harmonies unfortunately disappear in translation. Russian poetry has distinctive rhythmic patterns, owing notably to all the polysyllabic words that go rumbling by like freight trains in the night and that, unlike long words in English, have only one accented syllable apiece. The Anglophone reader who comes to *Onegin* has to choose from a welter of transla-

*Regular contributor Robert Wernick wrote most recently for* SMITHSONIAN *on the history of the Inns of Court.*

tions, many of which try to reproduce its intricate rhyme and stanza patterns and tend to degenerate into jingles, or flat-footed prosody.

Even so, the power of the poetry is, at a certain level, invincible. Take, for instance, this portrait of Onegin, translated by Charles Johnston, dreamlike and compelling even in its altered state:

> Evgeny stood, with soul regretful,
> and leant upon the granite shelf;
> he stood there, pensive and
> forgetful,
> just as the Poet paints himself.
> Silence was everywhere
> enthralling;
> just sentries to each other
> calling,
> and then a drozhky's clopping
> sound
> from Million Street came floating
> round;
> and then a boat, with oars
> a-swinging,
> swam on the river's dreaming face,
> and then, with an enchanting
> grace,
> came distant horns and gallant
> singing.

Undeterred by scaffolding, visitor lays wreath at Pushkin monument, Moscow.


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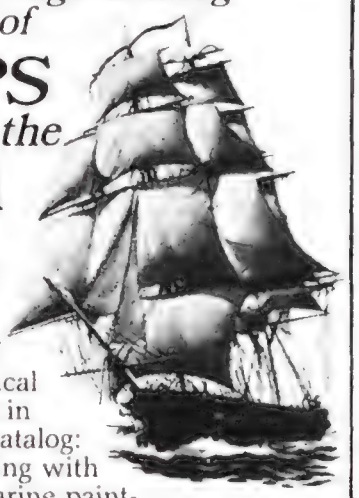

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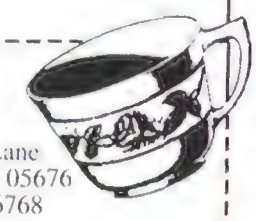

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Mikhaylovskoye, the family estate where Pushkin immersed himself in Russian folklore and produced masterpieces, is now a literary shrine.

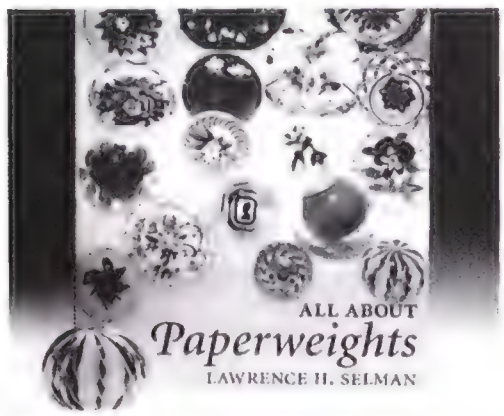
Deprived of its incomparable sound, *Onegin* is still sprightly and entertaining reading, but its scope is hardly Shakespearean. It is a conventional moral tale, rather like *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, of a man who commits an act of gratuitous cruelty (the mariner kills an albatross, Onegin kills a poet) and later pays for it in suffering. In fact, the verbal decoration is far more important than the plot.

Yet Russians of every political and cultural stripe will tell you forcibly that *Eugene Onegin* expresses the essence of their national character better than any other work of literature, and that Pushkin is the most deeply and wholly Russian of all their writers. Western readers do not hear Pushkin in their cradles; they generally come to him after their image of Russia has been fixed by a long line of intimidating figures, from Gogol through Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy and Solzhenitsyn. Generally they find him the least Russian, the most Western, of them all.

They expect a great Russian author to be expansive, mystical, messianic. When they come to Pushkin, they find that everything is clipped, clear, witty, gay. He has no interest in sin, redemption or dark nights of the soul. "Long live the sun! And down with the night!" he wrote in a poem in 1825, and everything he ever wrote about, brigands and ghosts and fairy-tale magicians, as well as peasants and card games and society balls, he looked at with the same dispassionate clarity.

What he did publish amounts to an impressive volume of work for a man who died at 37, and the Russians have every reason to admire and even worship the person who in effect created their modern literature. What had been written in Russian before his time was mainly a pale imitation of foreign models. Educated Russians relied largely on French: as a child Pushkin penned his first poems in that language, and his heroine Tatyana has to write her love letter to Onegin in French because she "expressed herself with difficulty in her native tongue."

By the time he died, Pushkin had elevated Russian to a marvelous instrument for all kinds of literary forms. He created the wellspring of the Russian novel and the Russian short story. He wrote drama, history, historical romance, pornography, fairy tales, re-

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alistic tales, fantastic tales, narrative poems, love poems, political poems—all with equal strength and grace.

His moods were unpredictable, and his behavior could be wholly captivating or wholly offensive. With his "terrible side-whiskers, his tousled hair, his long nails which looked like claws, his short stature, his mincing manners, the impudent way in which he stared at the women whom he found attractive, . . . and his natural and unlimited vanity" (the description comes from a girl he considered marrying, Anna Olenin) he could win unbounded devotion or unbounded dislike.

If he had not been a writer, he would have been a typical ne'er-do-well of the Russian upper classes. He drank compulsively, gambled and womanized compulsively—he had, he said, 113 great loves. He was also a compulsive duelist and used to walk about the public gardens swinging an 18-pound cudgel to strengthen and steady his pistol-firing arm.

He dueled often because he saw affronts to his honor everywhere. He was in fact a terrible snob, ever insisting on his ancient lineage: the Pushkins had been active in the maelstrom of Russian politics for 600 years. He was equally proud of his maternal great-grandfather Abram Petrovich Hannibal, an Abyssinian slave from whom he inherited his swarthy skin color and, he believed, his highly charged emotions. Hannibal had been bought from the Turks by Peter the Great, who named him a godson, educated him and paved the way for his military career.

All of Pushkin's glorious ancestors did him little good when it came to getting on in the world. In the decadent Russia of the early 19th century what counted was cash, and the Pushkin family had squandered its way down to poverty. "Poverty" of course has to be understood in a relative sense at the social level of the people Pushkin knew. The Larin family's "humble roof" in *Eugene Onegin* was big enough to shelter 50 guests for a birthday party.

Pushkin, at a time when the biographers describe him as hopelessly bankrupt, managed to produce from a family estate 200 human beings, serfs, who could be mortgaged for 38,000 rubles. This transaction provided enough to pay off some of his more pressing gambling debts, and to fund a dowry and trousseau for his bride. The young married couple had to make do with six servants.

Being always short of money forced Pushkin to become Russia's first professional poet. He knew his own value and bargained hard, pushing up his rates to a very respectable ten rubles a line. Still, there was never enough, and Pushkin's last years were spent in constant financial embarrassment.

Worse than the lack of money was the lack of freedom. Pushkin, like every Russian, was at the mercy of a despotic state, and it was only fitting that the agony of the Russian people be acted out by their greatest poet. It is this, more than the poems themselves, that explains their impassioned devotion to Pushkin. He was every Russian family's prodigal son, the debonair, charming, talented wastrel who could dash off a deathless stanza or two, then go out in the afternoon to eat cherries on the dueling field while his opponent was aiming.

Pushkin was immensely proud of being a Russian. But his great and glo-

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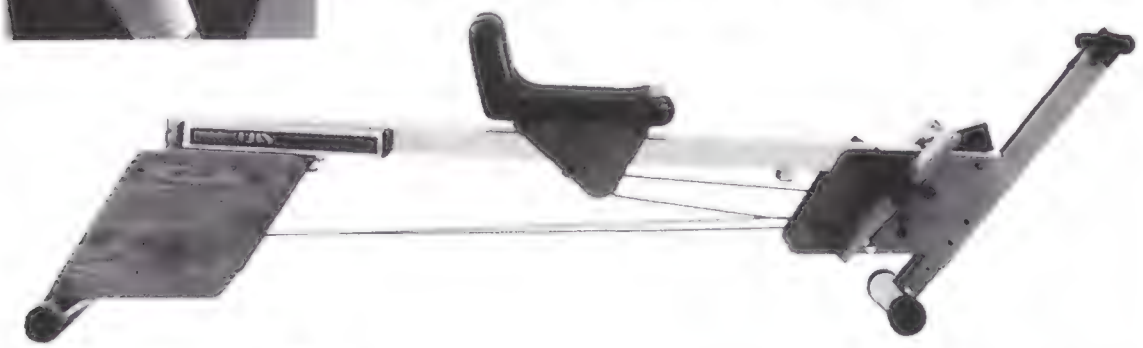

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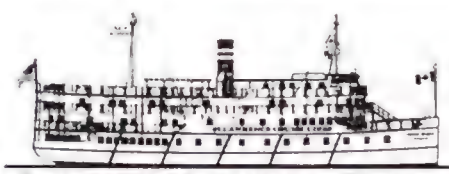

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Coquettish wife, Natalya, was said to be the greatest beauty in all of Russia.

rious land was also, in one sense, an immense prison. For the government in St. Petersburg had no intention of letting Pushkin fly free and publish whatever he wished. Emperors and their advisers have little patience with subversive poets. Count Uvarov, the Minister of Education, was supposed to have said, "Only when literature ceases to be written will I be able to sleep peacefully." They were terrified of the consequences literature might have.

Alexander I was horrified by Pushkin's poems with titles like "Ode to Liberty," which clearly mocked the autocracy and the orthodox faith. He was tempted to dispatch the poet to Siberia but was persuaded to relent and send him into internal exile, first in the south and then at Mikhaylovskoye, for five years.

Alexander's brother Nicholas I came to the throne in 1825 and soon permitted Pushkin to return to the capital. He smiled on the poet, offered him a government sinecure and told him that he would be his personal censor. Pushkin took this as a mark of favor and wrote flattering poems about Nicholas, but he soon learned that he was condemned to a constant regime of surveillance and interference. Nicholas and his adviser

Count Benckendorf, chief of the secret police, kept an unrelenting watch on Pushkin. They set spies on him, opened his mail and crossed out whole stanzas of his manuscripts.

There is a deeply moving allegory of Pushkin's plight in what many consider his greatest poem, "The Bronze Horseman," which he was never allowed to publish in his lifetime. The horseman is the equestrian statue of Peter the Great that dominates Senate Square in the city Peter built. A poor government clerk named Eugene stands before the great looming bronze and cries out his rage against it. He has lost everything, his beloved and his mind, as a result of a catastrophic flooding of the Neva that has devastated the city. And you, Eugene castigates Peter, were responsible—you who out of sheer pride built your capital on swampland where floods like this were bound to occur, where thousands of souls would be crushed by the inhuman achievements of empire. Empires have no time to spare for the whining of suffering nonentities, and the poem nears its conclusion with Eugene madly fleeing down the broad avenues, with the thud of vengeful bronze hoofs following ever closer.

Pushkin must have heard the bronze hoofs ringing behind him every day of the seven-year tragic farce that ended his life. Feeling "in his dotage" as he was approaching 30, Pushkin had decided to marry and settle down. His choice was Natalya Goncharova, whom he first set eyes on when she was 16, the loveliest girl in the land. He loved her madly, and she did her best to put up with the wild-eyed eccentric her parents finally picked for her. But there never could have been much real affinity between them. "Lord how you can bore me with your poetry, Pushkin," she said once.

What Natalya loved most was to lunch at 8 in the evening, then go off to a ball where she could dance and gossip and flirt and have all the young men swooning around her. She flirted with handsome Czar Nicholas, and he determined to make her a fixture of all his court balls. To hear the czar's command was to obey, and night after night Russia's greatest poet had to dress in regalia and appear at court. Interrupted only by Natalya's pregnancies, things went on like this for years. She grew ever more ravishing, he went on pouring out masterpieces, there was never enough money for the ball gowns and the champagne and the gambling debts.

Then in 1834 a messenger of fate arrived in the person of a young Frenchman named Georges d'Anthès. D'Anthès, who had been adopted by Baron van Heeckeren-Beverwaert of the Netherlands, Ambassador to the Russian court, spoke not a word of Russian. But the dashing member of the Horse Guards had no equal on the


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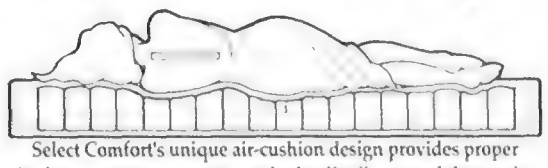

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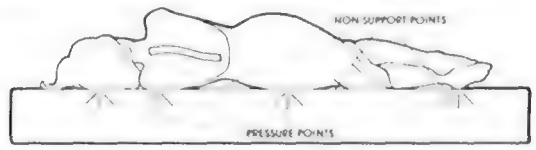


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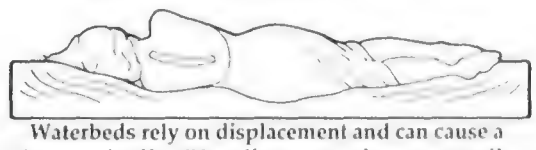

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Rival for Natalya's affections, dashing George d'Anthès was foe in fatal duel.

dance floor. He was tall, blond and handsome, and it was not long before he and Natalya Pushkin had waltzed together and fallen head over heels in love. They would spend whole evenings snatching moments for conversation behind marble pillars, while Pushkin could only glare.

One day a flock of anonymous letters went out announcing the election of Aleksandr Pushkin as "Coadjutant to the Grand Master of the Order of Cuckolds," and hinting that Natalya was mistress to the czar. Pushkin leapt to the conclusion that something so nasty could have been written only by Heeckeren. Since protocol forbade dueling with diplomats, Pushkin challenged Heeckeren's adopted son.

D'Anthès was more than willing, but Heeckeren and his friends rushed in and negotiated a bizarre solution. D'Anthès would state publicly that he courted Natalya only because he wanted to marry her older sister Katerina, and Pushkin would state that his honor had not been tainted. The duel was called off, and everyone waited to see what would happen next.

D'Anthès went ahead and married


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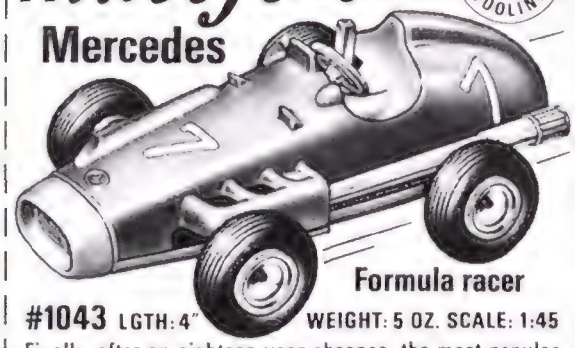

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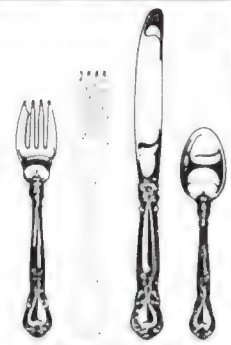

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Katerina, but it was soon clear that his motive was to give him an excuse for seeing more of his new sister-in-law. Pushkin forbade him to set foot in his house, but there was no way to stop him from mooning over Natalya all evening long on and off the dance floor. "Pushkin gnashes his teeth and assumes his constant expression of a tiger," wrote a friend in a gossipy letter. "Natalie dabs her eyes and blushes at the long and passionate gaze of her brother-in-law. [Katerina] directs on both of them a jealous lorgnette."

Finally provoked beyond endurance, Pushkin dashed off to Heeckeren a letter so crudely insulting ("Like some obscene old harpy, you have been sidling up to my wife in corners to urge the suit of your bastard") that a duel was inevitable. It was fixed for January 27, 1837.

On a sunny, late afternoon, Pushkin and d'Anthès rode out to a secluded spot in the suburbs. There was a law against dueling—not very seriously observed. So there was no one to interfere when the seconds trampled out a space in the deep snow where the opponents could stand 20 paces apart, walk 5 paces forward and fire. A German soothsayer had once foretold that Pushkin would meet his fate at the hands of a *weisser Mensch*, a white man. D'Anthès was wearing the white uniform of the Horse Guards. He was a crack shot. He fired first, and Pushkin fell with a wound in his lower abdomen. He propped himself up on his left hand to fire and hit d'Anthès in the chest, but a button deflected the bullet and d'Anthès got no more than two broken ribs.

They brought Pushkin back home in a sleigh, and he lay in intense pain for two days before he died.

No one was prepared for the outpouring of public grief that followed. Thousands of people, "women, old men, children, students, ordinary people in sheepskins and some even in rags," said his old friend Princess Meshchersky, trooped up to the apartment on the Moyka Embankment to bow and cross themselves and kiss the


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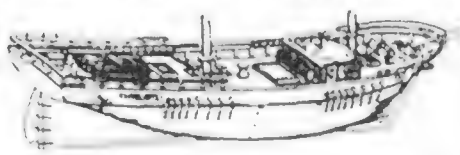

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hand of the dead poet. "You knew Pushkin personally no doubt?" one Prince Vyazemsky inquired of a sobbing old man. "No," he said, "but I am Russian."

The bronze horseman went on galloping after Pushkin even in death. His body was spirited out of the house at night, and the funeral services were held at a small church with no public announcement.

Again at night, Pushkin's body was slipped out of the church and driven off to Mikhaylovskoye. A woman who had known the poet was at a station where the carriage drivers were changing horses amid a display of police force. She asked what was going on. "Someone named Pushkin . . ." said a peasant, "rolled up in a piece of canvas like a dog." Only a handful of old friends were present when he was buried in frozen ground.

Czar Nicholas, who had always kept Pushkin on a tight financial rein, was very generous to his widow and children. Natalya, after a period of mourning, returned to St. Petersburg, back to the balls, to dancing and flirting with the emperor, and eventually—just like Tatyana—she married a major general and lived in quiet comfort with him till she died.

D'Anthès was demoted for his part in the duel, and returned with his bride Katerina to France, where they led a reasonably happy life.

These were only footnotes. What mattered was that the great love affair of the Russian people with Pushkin had come out into the open. In the death of their poet they had recognized the pathos of their own lot, eternally ruled by Nicholases and Benckendorfs. They would cherish his name forever.

"Gorbachev!" exclaimed a formidable old woman at the last Russian party I attended. "Do you know what Gorbachev will be remembered for long after all this nonsense is over and forgotten? He will go down in our memory as the man who went to France and brought home, as a gift to the Russian people, the pistols which Pushkin used in his fatal duel." But characteristically for any story involving Pushkin, there was a star-crossed conclusion—French museum officials insisted the pistols be returned six months later, and so the weapons remain in exile.

On grounds of the Svyatogorsky monastery, near Mikhaylovskoye, pilgrims at Pushkin's grave pay homage to the beloved poet.

# *Book reviews*

*Frederick Douglass*
William S. McFeely
Norton, $24.95

When Frederick Douglass lectured on the evils of slavery, his listeners burned with the abolitionist cause. A half-century later, suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton could remember the sensation that the 24-year-old black man created at a Boston meeting in 1842. "Around him sat the great antislavery orators of the day, earnestly watching the effect of his eloquence on that immense audience, that laughed and wept by turns, completely carried away by the wondrous gifts of his pathos and humor." The other speakers seemed tame by comparison. Douglass "stood there like an African prince, majestic in his wrath."

And he was a prince, this preeminent African-American of the 19th century. Easily the handsomest civil rights leader ever, Douglass stood more than six feet and, wrote an admirer, his "majestic form, as he rose to speak, straight as an arrow, muscular, yet lithe and graceful, his flashing eye, and more than all, his voice, that rivaled Webster's in its richness, and in the depth and sonorousness of its cadences, made up such an ideal of an orator as the listeners never forgot."

In the two decades before the Civil War, Douglass crisscrossed the North, speaking at nearly a hundred meetings a year. He successfully carried the message to Great Britain, encouraged John Brown in some of his desperate schemes (not the raid on Harpers Ferry), ran a newspaper called *North Star* and made his Rochester, New York, home a stop on the Underground Railroad.

He scorned to their faces the toughs who disrupted antislavery meetings; and when, as sometimes happened, he was chased out of town, he gave as good as he got. He upbraided President Lincoln to his face for his cautious approach to emancipation, and without any hesitation told Northern audiences they had no monopoly on virtue when it came to race prejudice.

The triumph was stunning: nothing less than the emancipation of three million slaves. Yet by the time of his death in 1895, a once idealistic and enthusiastic North had abandoned black people to the lynchings and Jim Crow laws of a merciless South.

There have been many previous biographies of Douglass, notably Benjamin Quarles' solid 1948 work. None of these works can approach William S. McFeely's beautifully crafted *Frederick Douglass* in its attempt to understand the man's turbulent life. McFeely, author of biographies of Ulysses S. Grant and Gen. O. O. Howard, the first com-


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missioner of the Freedmen's Bureau, knows the exquisite gradations of racism, North and South.

Professor of American history at Mount Holyoke College for many years before accepting a chair at the University of Georgia, McFeely can be witheringly funny on the dottiness of the cold-roast-beef Yankees who officered the abolitionist organizations—such as John A. Collins, executive secretary of the American Anti-Slavery Society, who scandalized all New England with his demand for an end to private property, or the formidable Maria Weston Chapman, secretary of the society, a woman "of victorious beauty" with a bearing that "might befit a line of duchesses."

Frederick Douglass was born in Talbot County, near Easton on Maryland's Eastern Shore, in 1818, the son of an unknown white father and a slave mother probably of partial Indian descent. In the three versions of his autobiography, he portrayed the Auld family, his former owners, as the cruel and unfeeling emblems of an oppressive social system. This was an inaccurate portrayal, and Douglass knew it. In fact the Aulds intervened to protect him from the system's rougher edges. It of course was not enough. One day in 1838 he got on a train with false merchant seaman papers and escaped north.

McFeely unravels the complexities of Douglass' ambiguous feelings toward the Aulds with precision and sympathy. Nothing in his book is more affecting than the visits that Douglass in middle age, by this time a famous man, paid to the various Auld branches in Baltimore and Talbot County.

Was Douglass ultimately a failure? After the Civil War, he accepted the patronage crumbs thrown his way by several Republican administrations. Booker T. Washington asserted that he was "the great defender of the race," but that "the long and bitter political struggle . . . had not prepared Mr. Douglass to take up the equally difficult task of fitting the Negro for the opportunities and responsibilities of freedom."

This is unfair. It is surely too much to ask that Moses lead his people out of Egypt not once but twice. In our own day, historian Nell Irving Painter credits Douglass as having anticipated the 20th century's civil rights movement, with his insistence on full political and economic equality for black Americans. Maybe so, but when one reads this fasci-


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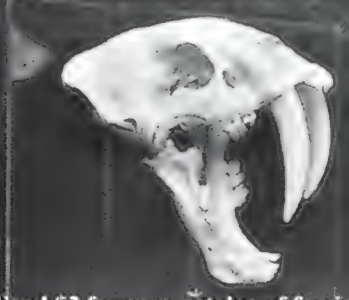

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nating and moving life and then follows it by reading Nicholas Lemann's *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How it Changed America* or Alex Kotlowitz's *There are No Children Here: The Story of Two Boys Growing Up in the Other America* (*Book reviews*, October 1991), one realizes that the way ahead is very long indeed.

Reviewer *Reid Beddow* is an editor on the staff of *Washington Post Book World.*

*The Year of the Turtle:*
*A Natural History*
David M. Carroll
Camden House, $22.95 ($17.95 paper)

Turtles still swim in my memory, dark comforting shadows, full of motion, among the freshest, most enchanting and enduring memories of childhood, those days I lived with my grandfather and great-uncle on their hardscrabble farm. Down the creek that ran behind the barn, down past the clapboard cabin where Elias Wonder, the full-blooded Sioux Indian, lived, was Karen's Pool, the deepest pocket of water along Starlight Creek.

Even on the most sudorific, stifling, Southern August afternoons, when the day's heat seemed to press against the land like hot iron and nothing stirred, not even a breeze high up among the hickory trees, the water at Karen's Pool stayed wonderfully cool, especially deep down. At day's end, an eager plunge into the pool, a leap from one of the high, smooth boulders, would wash the day's heat away, soothe sunburned skin.

Elias Wonder always let me know when the pool was prime, ready for use. He knew by keeping an eye on the local turtle population. As the spring days warmed, the turtles clawed their way out of the mud, appeared as suddenly as resurrection fern, and began to gather on the rocks and half-sunken logs, their dark heads and leathery necks stretched toward the warming sunlight.

Often there were so many turtles crowded in and around Karen's Pool that I thought of the place as some sort of turtle Mecca. Holy water. Day after day as the sun gained the far ridge, they would come to bask, stacking themselves on the damp, rotting logs three and four high. I would sit on a nearby boulder, dangling my feet in the water, watching them. They looked like rows of living, mysterious cairns.

I have been delightfully reminded of the beauty and innocence of those sum-

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mer days, and the wonder of the turtles, by David Carroll's fascinating book. The work of an accomplished naturalist and artist of great talent, it is the journal of a year spent following the life of the spotted turtle. It is difficult not to admire a man who loves turtles, who patiently observes and chronicles their lives, and who passes along those shy, secretive lives both in gracious prose and alluring drawings and paintings.

Carroll's passion for turtles is one he has nurtured since he was a boy and caught his first one. He has spent 40 years studying them and fighting for their protection and the preservation of their fragile and shrinking habitats.

His intention is not to take the turtle out of its world, but to immerse himself and the reader in the turtle's comings and goings through the wetlands of the Digs, a New England place of river, swamp, sedge meadow, fields and hills.

Ever the soft-spoken storyteller, Carroll records the turtle's life, from its appearance in spring to mating and egg laying, to its instinctive preparation for hibernation as it feels the shorter, colder days, the press of the coming winter.

Carroll's celebration of turtles turns out to be, as well, a celebration of this bit of wetland they inhabit. His pursuit of the spotted turtle becomes a panoramic view of the swamp, everything from beaver ponds and bogs to woodcocks stirring the cool air, from diving beetles to the delicate detail of cinnamon ferns. At the same time, he laments and broods about the continuing decline of many species of turtles worldwide, and the increasing destruction of vital turtle habitat from Northeastern meadows to South American rain forests.

The author's concern is genuine. Not only is he giving a good portion of his life to the protection and understanding of turtles, but he is also designating some of the proceeds from his book for the preservation of turtle habitat.

*The Year of the Turtle* is an eloquent reminder of what a sadder, duller place the world would be without turtles, come spring, clawing up on some fallen log to greet the warming sun, seeming to haul the new season up out of the cold mud with them; sitting there, a silent but clear siren for all to see and hear, especially small boys eager for the first splash into the chilly waters of their favorite swimming hole.

*Harry Middleton* now watches turtles and writes in Birmingham, Alabama.


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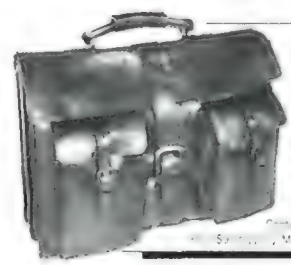


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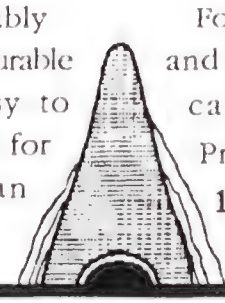

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# *Additional reading*

**Around the Mall** (p. 22)

*The Smithsonian Treasury: Minerals and Gems* by John S. White, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991

**Troy** (p. 28)

*In Search of the Trojan War* by Michael Wood, New American Library, 1985

*Troy and the Trojan War, A Symposium Held at Bryn Mawr College, October 1984*, edited by Machteld J. Mellink, Bryn Mawr College, 1986

*Troy and the Trojans* by Carl W. Blegen, Frederick A. Praeger (New York), 1963

*The Iliad* by Homer, translated by Robert Fitzgerald, Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1974

**Chiles** (p. 42)

*The Whole Chile Pepper Book* by Dave DeWitt and Nancy Gerlach, Little, Brown, 1990

*Peppers: The Domesticated Capsicums* by Jean Andrews, University of Texas Press, 1984

*Chile Pepper* (magazine), Out West Publishing (Albuquerque, New Mexico)

**Prado Museum** (p. 54)

*The Prado* by Santiago Alcolea Blanch, Harry N. Abrams, 1991

*Pasado, Presente Y Futuro del Museo del Prado* by Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, Fundación Juan March (Madrid), 1976

*A Basic Guide to The Prado* by J. Rogelio Buendia, Grefol (Madrid), 1979

**Bess of Hardwick** (p. 68)

*Bess of Hardwick* by David N. Durant, Atheneum, 1978

*Bess of Hardwick* by E. Carleton Williams, Longmans, Green (New York), 1959

*The English Country House: A Grand Tour* by Gervase Jackson-Stops and James Pipkin, Little, Brown, 1985

*The English Country House: an art and a way of life* by Olive Cook, Thames and Hudson (London), 1974

**Canine companions** (p. 80)

*The Loving Bond: Companion Animals in the Helping Professions*, edited by Phil Arkow, R & E Publishers (Saratoga, California), 1987

*Are You My Dog? How to Find Your Best Friend* by Dr. Janet Ruckert, Ten Speed Press, 1989

*A Service Dog Goes to School* by Elizabeth Simpson Smith, Morrow Junior Books, 1988

**Chang Dai-chien** (p. 90)

*Challenging the Past: The Paintings of Chang Dai-chien* by Shen C. Y. Fu, with major contributions and translated by Jan Stuart, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in association with University of Washington Press (Seattle), 1991

*Twentieth Century Chinese Painting*, edited by Maysching Kao, Oxford University Press, 1988

*The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art* by Michael Sullivan, University of California Press, 1989

*Master of Tradition: The Arts of Chang Dai-chien* by Richard E. Strassberg, Pacific Asia Museum (Pasadena, California), 1983

**Marble** (p. 98)

*Marble, The History of a Culture* by Luciana and Tiziano Mannoni, Facts on File, 1985

*Marble in the World* by G. Conti et al., Societa Editrice Apuana, 1986

*Marble, Colorado: City of Stone* by Duane Vandenbusche and Rex Myers, Golden Bell Press (Denver), 1970

*Elmer Bair's Story, 1899 to 1987* by Elmer O. Bair, Gran Farnum Publishing, 1987

**Aleksandr Pushkin** (p. 111)

*The Letters of Alexander Pushkin*, translated, with preface, introduction and notes by J. Thomas Shaw, University of Wisconsin Press, 1967

*Eugene Onegin* by Alexander Pushkin, translated by Charles Johnston, Penguin Books, 1979

*Pushkin* by Henri Troyat, translated by Nancy Amphoux, George Allen & Unwin (London), 1974

*Pushkin: A Biography* by David Magarshack, Chapman & Hall (London), 1967

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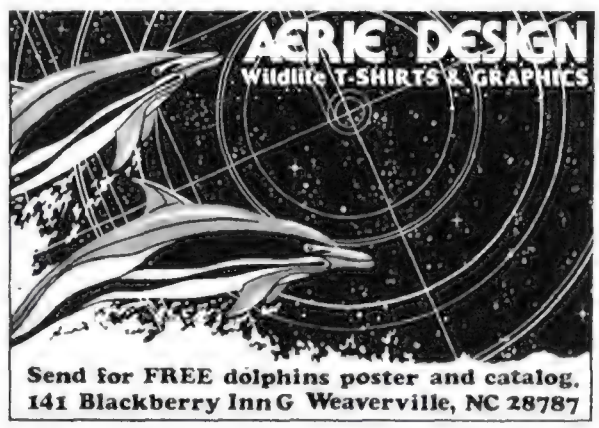


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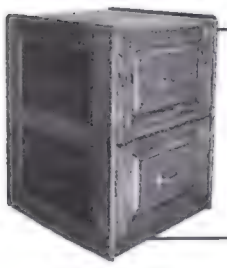
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# *Smithsonian highlights*

**Planning a Smithsonian visit?**

The new VHS video *Guide to the Smithsonian* is an excellent aid for previsit planning. For ordering information and the free Associates' Planning Packet, send a postcard to Associates' Reception Center, Smithsonian, Washington, D.C. 20560, or call (202) 357-2700. For hearing-impaired visitors, use TDD and call (202) 357-1729.

Begin your visit at the Smithsonian Information Center, located in the Castle. Hours are 9 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. daily.

**Freer remains closed**
The Freer Gallery of Art is closed until early 1993.

**Musical Weekend**

This year's Smithsonian Musical Weekend, May 1-3, marks the 20th anniversary of the Friends of Music at the Smithsonian. Festivities include a National Symphony Orchestra concert at the Kennedy Center; a performance by the Smithsonian Chamber Players; dinners in the Arts and Industries Building and the National Museum of American Art; tea and music at a local embassy; and breakfast at the National Zoo. For more information write to: Musical Weekend, Box 11271, Washington, D.C. 20008.

**Special January exhibits and events**

**National Portrait Gallery**
*TIME Covers the War: Personalities from World War II* (through May 17) Original portraits of wartime figures commissioned for the newsmagazine's covers. See *Highlights continued*, page 129.
*Collecting Portrait Prints: Washington Print Club Biennial* (through May 17) Fifty-four portrait prints.

**National Museum of American Art**
*Gene Davis* (through March 1) Installation of nine works by one of America's most innovative 20th-century painters.
*Homecoming: William H. Johnson and Afro-America, 1939-1946* (through March 1) Works by the noted African-American painter.

**Renwick Gallery**
*Albert Paley: Sculptural Adornment* (through March 22) Jewelry from the 1960s and '70s by the master of architectural ironwork.

**National Museum of African Art**
*Purpose and Perfection: Pottery as a Woman's Art in Central Africa* (opens January 15) New permanent installation features the museum's Central African pottery collection.
*The Art of the Personal Object* Permanent exhibit examines forms and functions of utilitarian objects from Africa.

**Arthur M. Sackler Gallery**
*The Art of Painting a Story: Narrative Images from Iran* (through May 10) Paintings from the Vever Collection.
*Challenging the Past: The Paintings of Chang Dai-chien* (through April 5) The work of one of the 20th century's foremost Chinese painters. See page 90.

**Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden**
*Robert Motherwell: Prints and Collages from the Collection* (through April 12) Sixteen works from the 1960s and '70s by the recently deceased American artist.

**National Museum of Natural History**
*The All-American Horse: Paintings of G. Harvey* (through September 7) An homage to the historic role of the horse in North America.
*Darkened Waters: Profile of an Oil Spill* (through April 19) The environmental impact of the *Exxon Valdez* disaster.
*Seeds of Change* (through April 1, 1993) Exhibition explores changes brought about by the exchange, begun 500 years ago, of five "seeds"—sugar, corn, the potato, the horse and disease—between the Old and New Worlds.

**National Museum of American History**
*Joyful Noise* (January 21-March 29) Photographs by Michael P. Smith document New Orleans street music.
*Working People* (January 21-March 29)

Steelworkers and coal miners through the lens of photographer Milton Rogovin.

**National Air and Space Museum**
*Legend, Memory and the Great War in the Air* New permanent exhibit looks at the reality of aviation in World War I.
*Antarctica* (6 P.M. daily through May 29) New Imax film explores the mysterious beauty of world's southernmost continent.

**Anacostia Museum**
*To Achieve These Rights: The Struggle for Equality and Self-Determination in the District of Columbia, 1791-1978* (January 19-July 26) Exhibition examines—from a legal-history perspective—the struggle by black people to secure equal rights in the nation's capital.

**Arts and Industries Building Experimental Gallery**
*Finding Your Way: A Historical and Hands-on Approach to Navigating* (through January 31) Interactive exhibit from San Francisco's Exploratorium.
*Powers of Ten* (through January 24) Scale model gives viewers a visual experience of the physical universe.

**International Gallery, S. Dillon Ripley Center**
*Degenerate Art: The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany* (through January 12) Artworks assembled by the Nazis for their 1937 "Degenerate Art" exhibit (SMITHSONIAN, July 1991). See *Smithsonian horizons*, page 12.

**Cooper-Hewitt Museum** (New York)
*The Cooper-Hewitt Collections: A Design Resource* (through August) Some 1,200 objects chronicle the history and collecting philosophy of one of the most important repositories of design.

**National Museum of the American Indian** (New York)
*Beadwork: Cornhusk Dolls and Cradleboards* (through March 15) The work of Cayuga artist Tammy Rahr.

**Exhibition catalogs**

Catalogs available currently include:
*Degenerate Art: The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany* (paper, $39.95; cloth, $75)
To order, send check or money order to Smithsonian Museum Shops, 8308 Cinder Bed Road, Newington, Virginia 22122. Include 15 percent of purchase for postage, handling (minimum, $1.75).


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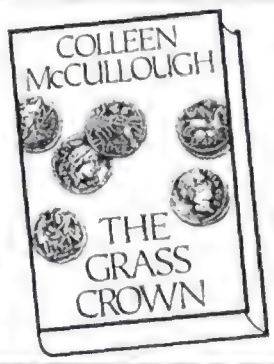


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### Smithsonian on the air

*Spirits of the Present: The Legacy from Native America* New series of half-hour public radio programs looks at the life of today's native Americans. Programs this month include: "Messages from the Grandparents" and "Through Carib Eyes." Check local listings.
*Folk Masters: Traditional Music in the Americas* Series of one-hour radio programs features award-winning performers. Check local public radio listings.

### Smithsonian National Associates

The National Associate Program will visit Tucson, Arizona, and Orlando and Tallahassee, Florida, this month. The Tucson program (January 17-19) will focus on the 1992 Quincentenary and native-American culture. In Orlando (January 29-February 2) topics will include space science and modern art. Events in Tallahassee (January 31-February 2) will include a lecture on African-American photographers.

For further information, write or call U.S. and International Events Program, 490 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Suite 4210, Washington, D.C. 20560; (202) 287-3210.

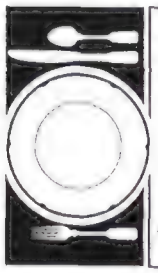
### Resident Associate Program

To become a Resident Associate, or for fee and ticket information, call (202) 357-3030. January events include:
*Antarctic Adventure* (January 13; 8:15 P.M.) Lecture by renowned American explorer Will Steger on his 1989 traverse.
*Spanish Dance Society* (January 12; 3 P.M. and 7:30 P.M.) A dazzling ensemble performs boleros, zapateados and fandangos.
*Mozart on Fifth* (January 31; 7:30 P.M.) Performance by the famed woodwind trio.

### Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service

SITES organizes and circulates exhibitions to cities throughout the United States and abroad. To sponsor a show in your community, write SITES, Smithsonian, Washington, D.C. 20560. Here are some January exhibits:

- Anchorage, Alaska (January 4-February 2) *Seeds of Change* (panel exhibition based on the NMNH exhibit marking the Quincentenary), Anchorage Municipal Libraries.
- Miami, Florida (January 4-February 2) *Seeds of Change*, Miami-Dade Public Library System.

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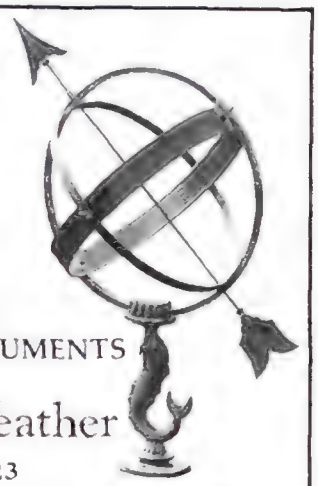

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# The imposing face of war

For the four years following the entry of the United States into World War II, *Time* magazine brought the imposing face of war into the living rooms of the American public. The vivid portraits that enlivened its covers during this period introduced its readers to the international retinue of individuals charged with conducting the war. This bold parade both influenced and reflected public opinion.

An arresting display of the original artwork for 36 of these covers opened at the National Portrait Gallery on December 7, Pearl Harbor Day. "*Time* Covers the War: Personalities from World War II" is drawn in part from the gallery's collection of original *Time* cover art.

The distinctive look of these covers was determined by the magazine's insistence on literal renderings of their subjects, and shaped, in large measure, by three of the cadre of artists recruited by *Time* to meet that weekly demand. Known collectively at the magazine as "ABC," they were Boris Artzybasheff, Ernest Hamlin Baker and Boris Chaliapin. Baker developed the publication's characteristic use of background symbols to define the cover subject's significance. Artzybasheff imbued machinery and nature with human qualities, and Chaliapin was renowned for completing rush assignments in record time.

The relentless march of World War II newsmakers across *Time*'s covers steps alive again at the National Portrait Gallery through May 17.

*Diane M. Bolz*

Gen. Sir Bernard Law Montgomery was portrayed by Boris Chaliapin in hallmark beret in February 1943.

Ernest Hamlin Baker set Col. Oveta Culp Hobby, commanding officer of the WACs, against profile of Minerva for 1944 portrait.

Ironclad dragon of German Army rears its head next to Field Marshal Karl von Rundstedt in Boris Artzybasheff cover.

Yugoslavia's Marshal Tito was cast against backdrop of partisans by Chaliapin for October 1944 *Time*.

Machinery of war comes to life behind Adm. Osami Nagano, Japan's naval chief, in powerful rendering by Artzybasheff.

Chaliapin depicted Soviet aviation head, Alexandr Novikov, for the July 31, 1944, issue. Novikov rebuilt Soviet Air Force.

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## Domestic Study Tours

Smithsonian "Anytime" Weekend
New low prices from $99 per person for a two-night package.

Hawaii Camping *March 14-28 or May 16-30*

New Orleans and Natchez *March 15-22*

Death Valley and Mojave Desert *March 20-29*

Gulf Coast Cruise *March 28-April 11*

Texas African Safari *April 1-5 or April 8-12*

Arizona in Spring *April 1-9*

Savannah and Charleston *April 3-10*

Jefferson's Virginia *April 10-16*

Rio Grande Rafting (Texas) *April 11-19*

Grand Canyon Weekend *April 23-26 or May 7-10*

Spring Gardens *May 1-9* Delaware Valley.

Okefenokee Swamp *May 3-8* Canoeing.

North Carolina Homes *May 3-10*

New York: Ellis Island *May 7-10*

Detroit Auto Barons *May 7-10*

Bryce, Zion and the North Rim *May 9-18*

Hudson River Valley *May 10-15*

Sojourn in Sedona (Arizona) *May 21-27*

Southwest Indians *May 23-June 2*

Smoky Mountains *May 30-June 4*

Grand Canyon Rafting *May 30-June 6*

Boston *June 6-10*

Chicago Architecture *June 17-21*

California's National Parks *June 20-28*

**NEW** Frank Lloyd Wright's Wisconsin *June 21-26*

Alaskan Landscapes *June 25-July 7 or July 9-21*

## Foreign Study Tours

Argentina-Lisbon Cruise *March 10-April 14*

Copper Canyon (Mexico) *March 13-20*

Papua New Guinea *March 13-April 2*

Australia-New Zealand *March 15-April 4*

Bermuda *March 19-23*

Costa Rica *March 20-April 3*

Indonesia Cruise *March 20-April 7*

Aztec Mexico *March 27-April 10*

Sea of Cortés Cruise *March 29-April 6*

Budapest, Prague and Berlin *April 1-12*

Morocco *April 4-18*

Durham (England) Country Stay *April 6-16*

Central Asia (USSR) *April 12-23*

Dutch-Belgian Waterways *April 13-27*

**NEW** Costa Rica Cruise *April 14-27*

Galápagos Cruise *April 18-29*

Treasures of the Nile *April 19-May 6*

Castles and Cathedrals of France *April 20-30*

Oriental Cruise *April 26-May 15*

**NEW** Crete, Rhodes and Santorini *May 7-21*

Countryside Tours *May-October* Relaxing sojourns in France, England, Wales, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Switzerland, Germany and Mexico.

USSR Golden Ring *May 3-16*

**NEW** Spring in Kent (England) *May 7-19*

Czechoslovakia *May 7-22*

Italy Cruise *May 9-25*

Gardens of Northern Italy *May 13-24*

Western Turkey *May 13-28*

Spain *May 13-29*

Denmark *May 20-June 2*

Swiss Country Stay *May 21-June 3 or June 4-17*

**NEW** Netherlands *May 28-June 8*

**NEW** Scotland's Northern Islands *May 29-June 14*

**NEW** Lake District (England) *June 1-11*

Pyrenees (France and Spain) *June 5-15*

Cotswolds Walks (England) *June 11-22*

Inside Ireland *June 13-24*

Walks in the French Alps *June 14-27*

Turkey Cruise *June 14-30* On the *Sea Cloud.*

Walks in Switzerland *June 20-July 5*

Mongolia and Trans-Siberian Railroad *June 21-July 12*

**NEW** Norway Fjords Cruise *June 23-July 3*

Sweden and Norway *June 25-July 8*

Russia by Train *June 27-July 14*

**NEW** Montreal, Quebec, Ontario *June 30-July 11*

8th Air Force (England) *July 1-14*

British Isles Cruise *July 5-21*

Scotland by Train *July 11-22*

Danube Cruise *July 19-August 5*

Yorkshire for Families *August 10-21*

## Seminars

Join top scholars for classroom study and tours. Courses are held in Washington, D.C. unless otherwise indicated.

Treasures of the Federal City *March 8-13 and March 15-20*

**Write to Smithsonian National Associate Program, Washington, DC 20560 or call (202) 357-4700 for tour and seminar brochures,**

## SMITHSONIAN-STYLE

Decorative Arts (New York) *March 19-22*

Churchill (England) *April 1-14*

Civil War at Fredericksburg *April 9-12*

Rome *April 15-27*

Landscape Design *May 3-7*

Inside Congress *May 4-7*

USSR Update *May 6-9*

Civil War in Gettysburg *May 6-9*

The New Astronomies (Tucson) *May 10-15 and May 17-23*

The News Media *May 13-16*

Greece *May 22-June 4*

Southwest Archaeology (Santa Fe) *May 25-29*

Interior Design (New York) *May 31-June 3*

Yellowstone Ecology (Wyoming) *June 1-7*

Creative Writing (Annapolis) *June 7-11*

Judaic Art *June 8-11*

Paris *June 19-30*

Kenya *June 29-July 16*

Bali *July 8-22*

## Research Expeditions

Contribute your talent and financial resources to Smithsonian research. Work with curators at museums or in the field.

Washington, D.C. *March 15-24* Research for American musical theater exhibit.

Costa Rica *April 11-23 and July 11-23* Monitor an active volcano.

Front Royal, Virginia *April 11-25* Wildlife research in the Shenandoah Valley.

Las Vegas *April 26-May 8* Research giant tortoises of the Mojave Desert.

Edgewater, Maryland *May 31-June 9* Document environmental research.

Saltville, Virginia *July 12-25 and July 26-August 8* Excavate Paleo-Indian remains.

**(202) 287-3210 for expedition brochures.**


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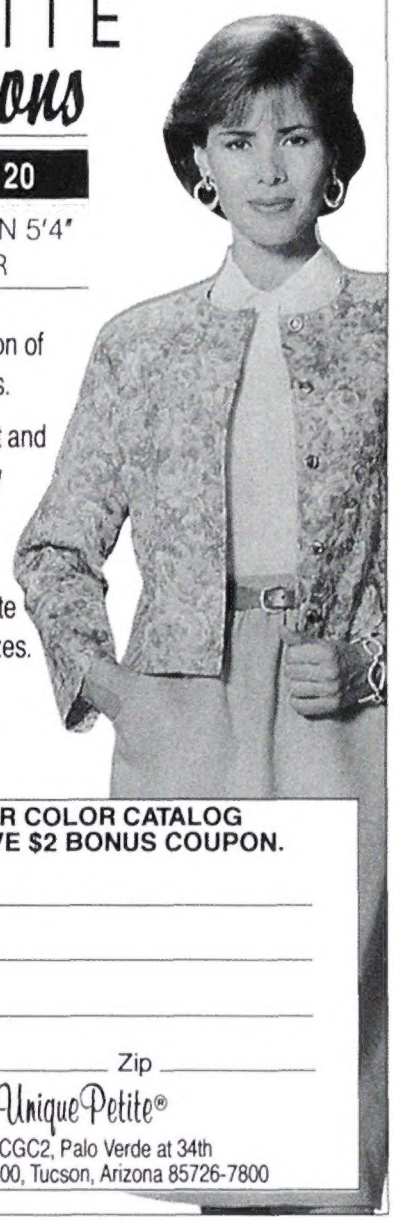

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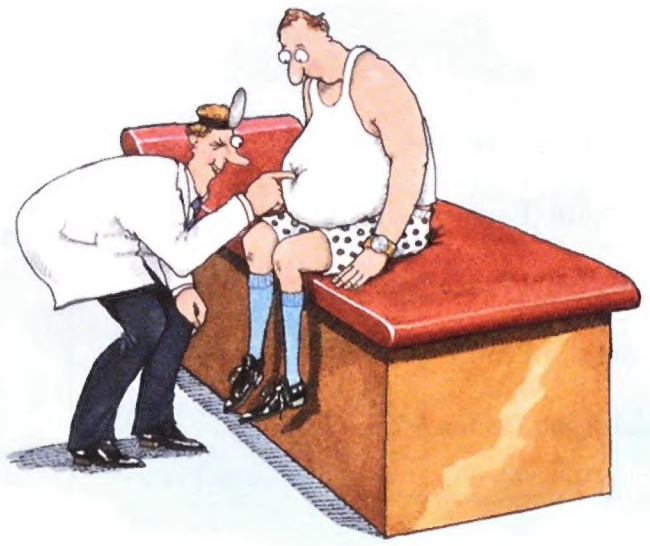
*By Donald Dale Jackson*

# *When you're all gut, there is no glory*



The old subject of what to do about my body came up again at the dinner table the other night, somewhere between the Béarnaise sauce and the cobbler. "You're going to have to do it sometime, you know that," my wife said, referring to the diet and exercise program I'd been promising to start for three years. "On the tennis court the other day you were about as nimble as William Howard Taft."

I reminded her that Taft was dead, but I knew she was right. The blobbo who shows up daily in my bathroom mirror has been looking even portlier lately. I have gone beyond paunchy, and obese seems within reach. I do want to do something about it, and I know it's the season for New Year's resolutions—but I'd like to think about it a little longer. My hunch is that the solution will involve giving up mayonnaise, and I'm not sure I'm ready. You know what I mean.

My daughter, the runner, mercifully came to my rescue. "Did you see that story in the paper about cosmetic surgery for men?" she asked. "It said that men are getting silicone implants in their chests and calves. It makes them look more muscular."

My wife noticed my widening eyes. "Forget it," she said. "When it comes to body parts you're a donor, not a donee. The only implant you need is willpower." But I was already thinking about how I'd look with a tonier chest and athletic calves. Maybe the beefed-up pectorals would offset the bulge to the south. It seemed to me that it was worth a shot.

I was a little apprehensive when the plastic surgeon I called asked me to send a photograph before I came in. I resisted the temptation to send a 12-year-old snapshot and did the honorable thing. But doubt began to cloud my mind when I looked around his waiting room. All the other patients were men in their 20s and 30s, with muscles rippling under their Hard Rock Cafe and Ocean Pacific T-shirts. These guys looked like the Olympic diving team. They were there for refinements, not an overhaul. They needed touching-up to complement their weight training and make them perfect physical specimens. I needed reconstruction.

I overheard a conversation between two guys named Rick and Boomer. "I'm bench-pressing 350 now," Rick was saying, "but I think I'm at the edge of the envelope. I felt a twinge in my triceps the other day. I'm looking to tone my tone, if you know what I mean."

"I read you," Boomer replied. "I maxed out about three months ago, but I still can't get this damned knob off my hip. The doc says it ought to be a snap."

"How much aerobic time are you doing?" Rick asked.

"Two, three hours a day," Boomer said. I suddenly realized that all six men in the room were reading magazines with pictures of bodybuilders or surfers on the cover. Rick nodded. "Me too," he said. Then the nurse called my name.

I thought I detected the remnants of a playful smile on the doctor's face as I entered his office. "We've just been looking at your picture, Mr.—ah, Jackson," he said. I had noticed the nurses in the hall glancing over their shoulders at me and giggling. I was apparently a hit.

He explained the procedure—pieces of sculpted silicone were inserted under the skin, next to the muscles. "We think of ourselves as nature's helpers," he explained. "We get rid of minor deformities and go for symmetry." His expression turned grave. "But in your case . . ." I won't bore you with what he said about my case—I know you're busy. Let's just say that he didn't see symmetry as a viable option.

He tried to let me down easy. "Our patients are usually, uh, a little younger, and reasonably fit," he murmured. I started to say something about combining an implant with an exercise program, but I don't think he heard me. He was on his feet, smiling as he walked me to the door. "We really enjoyed the picture," he said. "The nurse will get it for you."

I felt morose as I walked past the table in the waiting room piled high with surfing magazines, but then I reminded myself that the easiest way was not always the best way. I recalled that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. When the going gets tough, I remembered, the tough get going. No pain, no gain. No guts, no glory. It would be a struggle, but I could do it. All it took was discipline, motivation, willpower . . .

"What did the doctor say?" my wife asked that night as she passed the mayo.

"He said he was too busy to take me on right now," I replied.

"Did he give you back the picture?" she asked.

I soaked my biscuit in gravy and munched it in silence for a few moments, trying to ignore her smile. Our daughter, the runner, looked thoughtful.

"I saw a story about a new weight-loss system in Japan," she said. "They stick a syringe in your stomach and suck out all the fat. Two visits, 40 pounds, 5,000 yen."

"What's that in dollars?" I asked.

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